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THE

GREEK CLASSICS.

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER.



Translated by

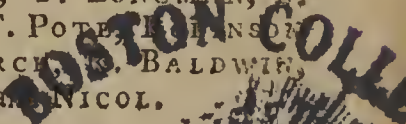
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THE
THIRTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

VOL. III.

B

THE
A R G U M E N T.

The Arrival of Ulysses in Ithaca.

ULYSSES takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ship arrives at Ithaca; where the sailors, as Ulysses is yet sleeping, lay him on the shore with all his treasures. On their return, Neptune changes their ship into a rock. In the mean-time Ulysses awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reason of a mist which Pallas had cast round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; 'till the Goddess appearing to him in the form of a shepherd, discovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned story of his adventures, upon which she manifests herself, and they consult together of the measures to be taken to destroy the suitors. To conceal his return, and disguise his person the more effectually, she changes him into the figure of an old beggar.

THE
THIRTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

HE ceas'd ; but left so pleasing on their ear
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to
hear.

A pause of silence hush'd the shady rooms :
The grateful conf'rence then the king resumes.

Whatever toils the great Ulysses past,
Beneath this happy roof they end at last ;

v. 3. — — *The shady rooms.*] The epithet in the original is *Κυβάντα*, or *gloomy* : it is here used with a peculiar propriety, to keep in the reader's mind the exact time when Ulysses made his narration to the Phæacians, namely, in the evening of the thirty-third day : we may likewise gather from this distinction of times, the exact stay of Ulysses among the Phæacians ; he was thrown upon their shores on the thirty-first day in the evening, and lands about day-break on the thirty-fifth day in his own country ; so that he stayed three nights only with Alcinous, one night being spent in his voyage to Ithaca from Phæacia.

No longer now from shore to shore to roam,
 Smooth seas, and gentle winds invite him home.
 But hear me, princes ! whom these walls inclose,
 For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows 10
 With wine unmixt, (an honour due to age,
 To cheer the grave, and warm the poet's rage)
 Tho' labour'd gold and many a dazzling vest
 Lie heap'd already for our god-like guest ;
 Without new treasures let him not remove, 15
 Large, and expressive of the publick love :
 Each peer a tripod, each a vase bestow,
 A gen'ral tribute, which the state shall owe.

This sentence pleas'd : then all their steps address
 To separate mansions, and retir'd to rest. 20

Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
 And shed her sacred light along the skies.
 Down to the haven and the ships in haste
 They bore the treasures, and in safety plac'd.

v. 10. *For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows
 With wine unmixt, &c.]*

Homer calls the wine *γερόσιον*, or wine drunk at the entertainment of elders, *γερότων*, or men of distinction, says Eustathius; by the bard, he means Demodocus.

The same critick further remarks, that Homer judiciously shortens every circumstance before he comes to the dismissal of Ulysses: thus he omits the description of the sacrifice, and the subject of the song of Demodocus; these are circumstances that at best would be but useless ornaments, and ill agree with the impatience of Ulysses to begin his voyage toward his country. These therefore the poet briefly dispatches.

The king himself the vases rang'd with care: 25

Then bade his followers to the feast repair,

A victim ox beneath the sacred hand

Of great Alcinous falls, and stains the sand.

To Jove th' Eternal, (Pow'r above all Pow'rs!

Who wings the winds, and darkens heav'n with
show'rs) 30

The flames ascend: till evening they prolong

The rites, more sacred made by heav'nly song:

For in the midst, with publick honours grac'd,

Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd;

All, but Ulysses, heard with fixt delight: 35

He sat, and ey'd the sun, and wish'd the night;

Slow seem'd the sun to move, the hours to roll,

His native home deep-imag'd in his soul.

As the tir'd ploughman spent with stubborn toil,

Whose oxen long have torn the furrow'd soil, 40

v. 39. *As the tir'd ploughman, &c.*] The simile which Homer chuses is drawn from low life, but very happily sets off the impatience of Ulysses: it is familiar, but expressive. Horace was not of the judgment of those who thought it mean, for he uses it in his epistles.

“ — — — — diesque

“ Longa videtur opus debentibus: ut piger annus

“ Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum;

“ Sic mihi tarda fluunt, ingrataque tempora, quæ
“ spem

“ Consiliumque morantur, &c.

It was necessary to dwell upon this impatience of Ulysses to return: it would have been absurd to have represented

Sees with delight the sun's declining ray,
 When home with feeble knees, he bends his way
 To late repast, (the day's hard labour done :)
 So to Ulysses welcome set the sun,
 Then instant, to Alcinous and the rest, 45
 (The Scherian states) he turn'd, and thus address.

O thou, the first in merit and command!
 And you the peers and princes of the land!
 May ev'ry joy be yours! nor this the least,
 When due libation shall have crown'd the feast, }
 Safe to my home to send your happy guest. 51 }
 Compleat are now the bounties you have giv'n,
 Be all those bounties but confirm'd by Heav'n!
 So may I find, when all my wand'rings cease,
 My comfort blameless, and my friends in peace. 55

him cool, or even moderately warm upon this occasion; he had refused immortality through the love of his country; it is now in his power to return to it; he ought therefore consistently with his former character to be drawn with the utmost earnestness of soul, and every moment must appear tedious that keeps him from it; it shews therefore the judgment of Homer to describe him in this manner, and not to pass it over cursorily, but force it upon the notice of the reader, by insisting upon it somewhat largely, and illustrating it by a proper similitude, to fix it more strongly upon our memory.

v. 53. *Be all those bounties but confirm'd by Heav'n!*] This is a pious and instructive sentence, and teaches, that though riches were heaped upon us with the greatest abundance and superfluity; yet unless Heaven adds its benediction, they will prove but at best a burden and calamity.

On you be ev'ry blifs ; and ev'ry day,
 In home-felt joys delighted, roll away ;
 Yourfelves, your wives, your long-defcending race,
 May ev'ry God enrich with ev'ry grace !
 Sure fixt on virtue may your nation ftand, 60
 And publick evil never touch the land !

His words well weigh'd, the gen'ral voice approv'd
 Benign, and instant his difmiffion mov'd.
 The monarch to Pontonous gave the fign,
 'To fill the goblet high with rofy wine : 65
 Great Jove the Father, firft (he cry'd) implore ;
 Then fend the ftranger to his native fhore.

The luscious wine th' obedient herald brought ;
 Around the manfion flow'd the purple draught :
 Each from his feat to each immortal pours, 70
 Whom glory circles in th' Olympian bow'rs.
 Ulyffes fole with air majeftick ftands,
 The bowl prefenting to Arete's hands ;

v. 73. *The bowl prefenting to Arete's hands ;*
Then thus — — —

It may be asked why Ulyffes addreffes his words to the queen rather than the king : the reason is, becaufe fhe was his patronefs, and had firft received him with hofpitality, as appears from the feventh book of the Odylfey.

Ulyffes makes a libation to the Gods, and prefents the bowl to the queen : this was the pious practice of antiquity upon all folemn occafions : Ulyffes here does it, becaufe he is to undertake a voyage, and it implies a prayer for the profperity of it. The reason why he prefents the bowl to the queen is, that fhe may firft drink out of it, for

Then thus: O Queen farewell! be still possess'd
 Of dear remembrance, blessing still and blest! 75
 'Till age and death shall gently call thee hence,
 (Sure fate of ev'ry mortal excellence!)
 Farewell! and joys successive ever spring
 To thee, to thine, the people, and the king!

Thus he; then parting prints the sandy shore 80
 To the fair port: a herald march'd before,
 Sent by Alcinous; of Arete's train
 Three chosen maids attend him to the main;
 This does a tunick and white vest convey,
 A various casket that, of rich inlay, 85
 And bread and wine the third. The chearful mates
 Safe in the hollow poop dispose the cates:
 Upon the deck soft painted robes they spread,
 With linen cover'd for the hero's bed.
 He clim'd the lofty stern! then gently prest 90
 The swelling couch, and lay compos'd to rest.

Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train
 Their cables loose, and lanch into the main:
 At once they bend, and strike their equal oars,
 And leave the sinking hills, and less'ning shores.
 While on the deck the chief in silence lies, 96
 And pleasing slumbers steal upon his eyes.

so *προπίνειν* properly and originally signifies, τὸ πρὸ ἐπιπέδου διδόναι τι πίνειν, says Eustathius. *Propino* is used differently by the Romans.

As fiery courfers in the rapid race
Urg'd by fiercé drivers thro the dusty space,

v. 98. *As fiery courfers in the rapid race—
Toss their high heads, &c.]*

The poet introduces two similitudes to represent the sailing of the Phæacian vessel: the former describes the motion of it, as it bounds and rises over the waves, like horses tossing their heads in a race; and also the steadiness of it, in that it sails with as much firmness over the billows, as horses tread upon the ground. The latter comparison is solely to shew the swiftness of the vessel.

The word in the original is *τελέταροι*; an instance, that four horses were sometimes joined to the chariot. Virgil has borrowed this comparison, *Æn. v.*

- “ Non tam præcipites bijugo certamine campum
- “ Corripuere, ruuntque effusi carcere currus,
- “ Nec sic immifis aurigæ undantia lora
- “ Concuffere jugis, pronique in verbera pendent.”

It must be allowed that nothing was ever more happily executed than this description, and the copy far exceeds the original. Macrobius, *Saturnal. lib. v.* gives this as his opinion, and his reasons for it. The Greek poet (says that author) paints only the swiftness of the horses when scourged by the driver; Virgil adds, the rushing of the chariot, the fields as it were devoured by the rapidity of the horses; we see the throwing up of the reins, in *undantia lora*: and the attitude of the driver, leaning forward in the act of lashing of the horses, in the words, *Pronique in verbera pendent*. It is true, nothing could be added more elegantly than the *ὑψος ἀειρόμενοι*, in Homer; it paints at once the swiftness of the race, and the rising posture of the horses in the act of running; but Virgil is more copious, and has omitted no circumstance, and set the whole

Toss their high heads, and scour along the plain ;
 So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main. 101
 Back to the stern the parted billows flow,
 And the black ocean foams and roars below.

Thus with spread sails the winged galley flies ;
 Less swift an eagle cuts the liquid skies ; 105
 Divine Ulysses was her sacred load,
 A man, in wisdom equal to a God !
 Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
 In storms by sea, and combats on the shore :
 All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast,
 Wrapt in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest. 111

But when the morning star with early ray
 Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day ;

race fully before our eyes ; we may add, that the versification is as beautiful as the description compleat ; every ear must be sensible of it.

I will only further observe the judgment of Homer in speaking of every person in his particular character. When a vain-glorious Phæacian described the sailing of his own vessels, they were swift as thought, and endued with reason ; when Homer speaks in his own person to his readers, they are said only to be swift as hawks or horses : Homer speaks like a poet, with some degree of amplification, but not with so much hyperbole as Alcinous. No people speak so fondly as sailors of their own ships to this day, and particularly are still apt to talk of them as of living creatures.

v. 112. *But when the morning star with early ray
 Flam'd in the front of heav'n — —]*

From this passage we may gather, that Ithaca is distant from Corcyra or Phæacia no farther than a vessel sails in

Like distant clouds the mariner descries
 Fair Ithaca's emerging hills arise. 115
 Far from the town a spacious port appears,
 Sacred to Phorcys' pow'r, whose name it bears:
 Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,
 The roaring wind's tempestuous rage restrain ;

the compass of one night ; and this agrees with the real distance between those islands ; an instance that Homer was well acquainted with geography : this is the morning of the thirty-fifth day.

v. 116. — — *A spacious port appears,*
Sacred to Phorcys' — —]

Phorcys was the son of Pontus and Terra, according to Hesiod's genealogy of the Gods : this haven is said to be sacred to that Deity, because he had a temple near it, from whence it received its appellation.

The whole voyage of Ulysses to his country, and indeed the whole *Odyssey*, has been turned into allegory ; which I will lay before the reader as an instance of a trifling industry and strong imagination. Ulysses is in search of true felicity, the Ithaca and Penelope of Homer : he runs through many difficulties and dangers ; this shews that happiness is not to be attained without labour and afflictions. He has several companions, who perish by their vices, and he alone escapes by the assistance of the Phæacians, and is transported in his sleep to his country ; that is, the Phæacians, whose name implies blackness, φαίος, are the mourners at his death, and attend him to his grave : the ship is his grave, which is afterwards turned into a rock ; which represents his monumental marble ; his sleep means death, through which alone man arrives at eternal felicity. *Spondanus.*

Within, the waves in softer murmurs glide, 120
 And ships secure without their halbers ride,
 High at the head a branching olive grows,
 And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.
 Beneath a gloomy grotto's cool recess
 Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas ; 125

v. 124. — — *a gloomy grotto's cool recess.*] Porphyry has wrote a volume to explain this cave of the Nymphs, with more piety perhaps than judgment ; and another person has perverted it into the utmost obscenity, and both allegorically. Porphyry (observes Eustathius) is of opinion, that the cave means the world ; it is called gloomy, but agreeable, because it was made out of darkness, and afterwards set in this agreeable order by the hand of the Deity. It is consecrated to the Nymphs ; that is, it is destined to the habitation of spiritual substances united to the body : the bowls and urns of living stone, are the bodies which are formed out of the earth ; the bees that make their honey in the cave are the souls of men, which perform all their operations in the body, and animate it ; the beams on which the Nymphs roll their webs, are the bones over which the admirable embroidery of nerves, veins and arteries are spread ; the fountains which water the cave are the seas, rivers and lakes that water the world ; and the two gates, are the two poles ; through the northern the souls descend from heaven to animate the body, through the southern they ascend to heaven, after they are separated from the body by death. But I confess I should rather chuse to understand the description poetically, believing that Homer never dreamed of these matters, though the age in which he flourished was addicted to allegory. How often do painters draw from the imagination only, merely to please the eye ? And why might not Homer write after it, especially in this place where he manifestly indulges his fancy, while he brings his hero to the first dawning of

Where bowls and urns were form'd of living stone,
 And massy beams in native marble shone ;
 On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd,
 Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.
 Within the cave the clust'ring bees attend 130
 Their waxen works, or from the roof depend.
 Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide ;
 Two marble doors unfold on either side ;
 Sacred the south, by which the Gods descend,
 But mortals enter at the northern end. 135

happiness? He has long dwelt upon a series of horrors, and his imagination being tired with the melancholy story, it is not impossible but his spirit might be enlivened with the subject while he wrote, and this might lead him to indulge his fancy in a wonderful, and perhaps fabulous description. In short, I should much rather chuse to believe that the memory of the things to which he alludes in the description of the cave is lost, than credit such a labour'd and distant allegory.

v. 134. *Sacred the south, by which the Gods descend*] Virgil has imitated the description of this haven, *Æn.* lib. i.

“ Est in secessu longo locus, insula portum
 “ Efficit, objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
 “ Frangitur,” &c. — —

Within a long recess there lies a bay,
 An island shades it from the rolling sea,
 And forms a port secure for ships to ride,
 Broke by the jutting land on either side,
 In double streams the briny waters glide.
 Betwixt two rows of rocks, a silvan scene
 Appears above, and groves for ever green :

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ship to land,
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand)

A grot is form'd beneath with mossy seats,
To rest the Nereids, and exclude the heats;
Down from the crannies of the living walls
The crystal streams descend in murmuring falls,
No halfers need to bind the vessels here.
Nor bearded anchors, for no storms they fear.

Dryden.

Scaliger infinitely prefers the Roman poet: Homer, says he, speaks *humilia humiliter*, *Virgilius grandiora magnifice*; but what I would chiefly observe is, not what Virgil has imitated, but what he has omitted; namely, all that seems odd, or less intelligible; I mean the works of the bees in a cave so damp and moist; and the two gates through which the Gods and men enter.

I shall offer a conjecture to explain these two lines:

Sacred the south, by which the Gods descend,
But mortals enter at the northern end.

It has already been observed, that the Æthiopians held an annual sacrifice of twelve days to the Gods: all that time they carried all their images in procession, and placed them at their festivals, and for this reason the Gods were said to feast with the Æthiopians; that is, they were present with them by their statues: thus also Themis was said to form or dissolve assemblies, because they carried her image to the assemblies when they were convened, and when they were broken up they carried it away. Now we have already remarked, that this port was sacred to Phorcys, because he had a temple by it: it may not then be impossible, but that this temple having two doors, they might carry the statues of the Gods in their processions through the southern gate, which might be consecrated to this use only, and the populace be forbid to enter by it:

Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.

for that reason the Deities were said to enter, namely, by their images. As the other gate being allotted to common use, was said to be the passage for mortals.

v. 138. *Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.]*

There is nothing in the whole *Odyssey* that more shocks our reason than the exposing *Ulysses* asleep on the shore by the *Phæacians*. “ The passage (says *Aristotle* in his *Poeticks*) where “ *Ulysses* is landed in *Ithaca*, is so full of “ absurdities, that they would be intolerable in a bad “ poet; but *Homer* has concealed them under an infinity “ of admirable beauties, with which he has adorned all “ that part of the *Odyssey*; these he has crowded together, as so many charms to hinder our perceiving the “ defects of the story.” *Aristotle* must be allowed to speak with great judgment; for what probability is there that a man so prudent as *Ulysses*, who was alone in a vessel at the discretion of strangers, should sleep so soundly, as to be taken out of it, carried with all his baggage on shore, and the *Phæacians* should set sail, and he never awake? This is still more absurd, if we remember that *Ulysses* has his soul so strongly bent upon his country; is it then possible, that he could be thus sunk into a lethargy, in the moment when he arrives at it? “ However (says *Monf. Dacier* in his reflections upon *Aristotle's* “ *Poeticks*) *Homer* was not ashamed of that absurdity, “ but not being able to omit it, he used it to give probability to the succeeding story: it was necessary for *Ulysses* to land alone, in order to his concealment: if he “ had been discovered, the suitors would immediately “ have destroyed him, if not as the real *Ulysses*, yet under

His treasures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid 140
 In the wild olive's unfrequented shade,

“ the pretext of his being an impostor ; they would then
 “ have seized his dominions, and married Penelope : now
 “ if he had been waked, the Phæacians would have been
 “ obliged to have attended him, which he could not have
 “ denied with decency, nor accepted with safety : Homer
 “ therefore had no other way left to unravel his fable hap-
 “ pily : but he knew what was absurd in this method,
 “ and uses means to hide it ; he lavishes out all his wit
 “ and address, and lays together such an abundance of
 “ admirable poetry, that the mind of the reader is so
 “ enchanted, that he perceives not the defect ; he is like
 “ Ulysses lulled asleep, and knows no more than that hero,
 “ how he comes there. That great poet first describes the
 “ ceremony of Ulysses taking leave of Alcinous and his
 “ queen Arete ; then he sets off the swiftness of the vessel
 “ by two beautiful comparisons ; he describes the haven
 “ with great exactness, and adds to it the description of
 “ the cave of the Nymphs ; this last astonishes the reader,
 “ and he is so intent upon it, that he has no attention
 “ to consider the absurdity in the manner of Ulysses's
 “ landing : in this moment when he perceives the mind
 “ of the reader as it were intoxicated with these beauties,
 “ he steals Ulysses on shore, and dismisses the Phæacians ;
 “ all this takes up but eight verses. And then, lest the
 “ reader should reflect upon it, he immediately introduces
 “ the Deities, and gives us a dialogue between Jupiter
 “ and Neptune. This keeps up still our wonder, and
 “ our reason has not time to deliberate ; and when the
 “ dialogue is ended, a second wonder succeeds, the bark
 “ is transformed into a rock : this is done in the sight of
 “ the Phæacians, by which method the poet carries us a
 “ while from the consideration of Ulysses, by removing
 “ the scene to a distant island ; there he detains us till

Secure from theft : then lanch'd the bark again,
Resum'd their oars, and measur'd back the main.

“ we may be supposed to have forgot the past absurdities, by relating the astonishment of Alcinous at the sight of the prodigy, and offering up to Neptune, to appease his anger, a sacrifice of twelve bulls. Then he returns to Ulysses who now wakes, and not knowing the place where he was, (because Minerva made all things appear in a disguised view) he complains of his misfortunes, and accuses the Phæacians of infidelity ; at length Minerva comes to him in the shape of a young shepherd, &c. Thus this absurdity, which appears in the fable when examined alone, is hidden by the beauties that surround it ; this passage is more adorned with fiction, and more wrought up with a variety of poetical ornaments than most other places of the Odyssey. From hence Aristotle makes an excellent observation. All efforts imaginable (says that author) ought to be made to form the fable rightly from the beginning ; but if it so happen that some places must necessarily appear absurd, they must be admitted, especially if they contribute to render the rest more probable ; but the poet ought to reserve all the ornaments of diction for these weak parts : the places that have either shining sentiments or manners have no occasion for them, a dazzling expression rather damages them, and serves only to eclipse their beauty.”

v. 142. — — *Then lanch'd the bark again.*] This voluntary and unexpected return of the Phæacians, and their landing Ulysses in his sleep, seems as unaccountable on the part of the Phæacians as of Ulysses : for what can be more absurd than to see them exposing a king and his effects upon the shores without his knowledge, and flying away secretly as from an enemy ? Having therefore in the pre-

Nor yet forgot old ocean's dread Supreme
The vengeance vow'd for eyeless Polypheme. 145

ceding note shewed what the criticks say in condemnation of Homer, it is but justice to lay together what they say in his defence.

That the Phæacians should fly away in secret is no wonder : Ulysses had through the whole course of the eleventh book, (particularly by the mouth of the prophet Tiresias) told the Phæacians that the suitors plotted his destruction ; and therefore the mariners might very reasonably be apprehensive that the suitors would use any persons as enemies, who should contribute to restore Ulysses to his country. It was therefore necessary that they should sail away without any stay upon the Ithacan shores. This is the reason why they made this voyage by night ; namely to avoid discovery ; and it was as necessary to return immediately, that is, just at the appearance of day, before people were abroad, that they might escape observation.

Eustathius remarks, that the Phæacians were an unwarlike nation, or as it is expressed by a Phæacian,

Οὐ γὰρ φαίηκεσσι μέλει βίος, ἔδ'ε φαρέτην,

and therefore they were afraid to teach any persons the way to their own country, by discovering the course of navigation to it ; for this reason they begin their voyage to Ithaca by night, land Ulysses without waking him, and return at the appearance of day-light, that they might not shew what course was to be steered to come to the Phæacian shores.

Plutarch in his treatise of Reading the Poets, tells us, that there is a tradition among the Tuscans, that Ulysses was naturally *dreamy*, and a person that could not easily be conversed with, by reason of that *sleepy* disposition. But perhaps this might be only artful in a man of so great wisdom, and so great disguise or dissimulation : he was slow

Before the throne of mighty Jove he stood;
 And fought the secret counsels of the God.

to give answers when he had no mind to give any at all: though indeed it must be confessed, that this tradition is countenanced by his behaviour in the *Odyssey*, or rather may be only a story formed from it: his greatest calamities rise from his *sleeping*: when he was ready to land upon his own country by the favour of *Æolus*, he falls *asleep*, and his companions let loose a wind that bears him from it: he is *asleep* while they kill the oxen of *Apollo*; and here he sleeps while he is landed upon his own country. It might perhaps be this conduct in *Homer*, that gave *Horace* the hint to say,

“ — — Aliquando bonus dormitat *Homerus*.”

Implying, that when *Homer* was at a loss to bring any difficult matter to an issue, he immediately laid his hero *asleep*, and this solved all the difficulty; as in the above-mentioned instances.

Plutarch is of opinion, that this *sleep* of *Ulysses* was feigned: and that he made use of the pretence of a *natural infirmity*, to conceal the straits he was in at that time in his thoughts; being ashamed to dismiss the *Phæacians* without entertainment and gifts of hospitality; and afraid of being discovered by the suitors, if he entertained such a multitude; therefore to avoid both these difficulties, he feigns a sleep while they land him, till they sail away.

Eustathius agrees with *Plutarch* in the main, and adds another reason why the *Phæacians* land *Ulysses* sleeping; namely, because they were ashamed to wake him, lest he should think they did it out of avarice, and expectation of a reward for bringing him to his own country.

I will only add, that there might be a natural reason for the sleep of *Ulysses*; we are to remember that this is a voyage in the night, the season of repose: and his spirits

Shall then no more, O Sire of Gods ! be mine
 The rights and honours of a Pow'r divine ?
 Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh severe disgrace) 150
 By soft Phæacians, my degenerate race !
 Against yon' destin'd head in vain I swore,
 And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his shore ;
 To reach his natal shore was thy decree ;
 Mild I obey'd, for who shall war with thee ? 155

having been long agitated and fatigued by his calamities,
 might upon his peace of mind at the return to his country,
 settle into a deep calmness and tranquillity, and so sink
 him into a deep sleep ; Homer himself seems to give this
 as a reason of it in the following lines :

Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
 In storms by sea, and combats on the shore ;
 All which soft-sleep now banish'd from his breast,
 Wrapt in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.

It must be allowed that the last line admirably paves the
 way for the following account ; and the poet undoubtedly
 inserted it, to prevent our surprize at the manner of his
 being set on shore, by calling his sleep

— — a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.

How far a wise man is obliged to resist the calls of nature,
 I leave to the discussion of philosophers ; those of sleep are
 no more to be resisted, than those of thirst or hunger.
 But yet I confess Ulysses yielded unseasonably, and the
 strong passion and love for his country that so fully pos-
 sessed his soul, should have given him a few hours of vi-
 gilance, when he was ready to see it after an absence of al-
 most twenty years.

Behold him landed, careless and asleep,
 From all th' eluded dangers of the deep!
 Lo where he lies, amidst a shining store
 Of brass, rich garments, and refulgent ore:
 And bears triumphant to his native isle 160
 A prize more worth than Ilion's noble spoil.

To whom the Father of th' immortal Pow'rs,
 Who swells the clouds, and gladdens earth with
 show'rs.

Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain!
 Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundless main!
 Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes, 166

Antient and great! a God above the Gods!
 If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,
 (Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?

Go then, the guilty at thy will chastise. 170
 He said: the Shaker of the earth replies,

This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship
 A mark of vengeance on the sable deep:

v. 172. *This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship
 A mark of vengeance — —
 And roots her down, an everlasting rock.]*

I refer the reader to the eighth book of the *Odyssey*, for a further account of this transformation. Scaliger condemns it, *Ulyssis navis in saxum mutatur a Neptuno, ut immortalem faciat, quem odio habere debuit*. But will it not be an answer to say, that it is an immortal monument of the vengeance and power of Neptune, and that whenever the story of the vessel was mentioned, the punishment likewise must be remembered in honour of that Deity?

To warn the thoughtless self-confiding train.

No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main. 175

Some are of opinion, that it is a physical allegory, and that Homer delivers the opinion of the ancients concerning the transmutation of one species into another, as wood into stone, by water, that is, by Neptune the God of it; according to those lines of Ovid,

“ Flumen habent Cicones, quod potum saxea reddit

“ Viscera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus.”

But perhaps this is only one of those marvellous fictions written after the taste of antiquity, which delighted in wonders, and which the nature of Epick Poetry allows.

“ The marvellous (says Aristotle in his Poetics) ought
“ to take place in tragedy, but much more in the epick,
“ in which it proceeds even to the extravagant; for the
“ marvellous is always agreeable; and a proof of it is,
“ that those who relate any thing, generally add some-
“ thing to the truth of it, that it may better please those
“ who hear it. Homer (continues he) is the man who
“ has given the best instructions to other poets how to tell
“ lies agreeably.” Horace is of the same opinion.

“ Atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,

“ Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet imum.”

However, we must not think that Aristotle advises poets to put things evidently false and impossible into their poems, or gives them license to run out into wildness; he only means (as *Monf. Dacier* observes) that the wonderful should exceed the probable, but not destroy it; and this will be effected, if the poet has the address to prepare the reader, and to lead him by a probable train of things that depend on miracle, to the miracle itself, and reconcile him to it by degrees, so that his reason does not perceive, at least is not shocked at the illusion: thus for instance,

Full in their port a shady hill shall rise,
 If such thy will. — We will it, Jove replies.
 Ev'n when with transport black'ning all the strand,
 The swarming people hail their ship to land,
 Fix her for ever, a memorial stone: 180
 Still let her seem to sail, and seem alone;
 The trembling crouds shall see the sudden shade
 Of whelming mountains overhang their head!

With that, the God whose earthquakes rock the
 ground,

Fierce to Phæacia crost the vast profound. 185
 Swift as a swallow sweeps the liquid way,
 The winged pinnace shot along the sea.
 The God arrests her with a sudden stroke,
 And roots her down an everlasting rock.

Homer puts this transformation into the hands of a Deity? He prepares us for it in the eighth book, he gives us the reason of the transformation; namely, the anger of Neptune; and at last he brings in Jupiter assenting to it. This is the method Homer takes to reconcile it to probability: Virgil undoubtedly thought it a beauty: for, after Homer's example, he gives us a transformation of the ships of Æneas into sea-nymphs.

I have already remarked from Bossu, that such miracles as these ought not to be too frequent in an epick poem; all the machines that require divine probability ought to be so detached from the action of the poem, that they may be retrenched from it, without destroying the action: those that are essential to the action, ought to be founded upon human probability. Thus if we take away this transformation, there is no chasm; and it in no way affects the integrity of the action.

Aghast the Scherians stand in deep surprize; 190

All press to speak, all question with their eyes.

What hands unseen the rapid bark restrain!

And yet it swims, or seems to swim, the main!

Thus they, unconscious of the deed divine:

'Till great Alcinous rising own'd the sign. 195

Behold the long predestin'd day! (he cries)

Oh certain faith of antient prophecies!

These ears have heard my royal sire disclose

A dreadful story, big with future woes; 199

How mov'd with wrath, that careless we convey

Promiscuous ev'ry guest to ev'ry bay,

Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command

Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand;

(A monument of wrath) and mound on mound

Shou'd hide our walls, or whelm beneath the

ground. 205

The Fates have follow'd as declar'd the fear.

Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear.

No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more

With ev'ry stranger pass from shore to shore;

On angry Neptune now for mercy call: 210

To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.

So may the God reverse his purpos'd will,

Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.

The monarch spoke: they trembled and obey'd,

Forth on the sands the victim oxen led: 215

v. 112. *So may the God reverse his purpos'd will.*] This agrees with what Homer writes in a former part of the *Odyssey*.

The gather'd tribes before the altars stand,
 And chiefs and rulers a majestic band.
 The King of Ocean all the tribes implore ;
 The blazing altars redden all the shore.

Meanwhile Ulysses in his country lay, 220
 Releas'd from sleep, and round him might survey }
 The solitary shore, and rolling sea. }
 Yet had his mind thro' tedious absence lost
 The dear remembrance of his native coast ;

— — *ερεπλοι κ' θεοι αυται.*

That the Gods themselves may be prevailed upon to change their anger by prayer: a sentiment agreeable to true religion. Homer does not tell us that the last denunciation of covering the town with a mountain was fulfilled: it is probable that it was averted by the piety of Alcinous. But (as Eustathius observes) it was artful in the poet to leave this point doubtful, to avoid detection in deviating from true history; for should posterity enquire where this land of the Phæacians lay, it would be found to be Corfu of the Venetians, and not covered with any mountain; but should this city have happened to have been utterly abolished by time, and so lost to posterity, it would have agreed with the relation of Homer, who leaves room to suppose it destroyed by Neptune. But how could Neptune be said to cover it with a mountain? Had not an inundation been more suitable to the God of the ocean? Neptune is called *ἐνοσίγαιος*, and *ἐνοσίχθων*, or the *Earth-shaker*; earthquakes were supposed to be occasioned by the ocean, or waters concealed in the caverns of the ground; and consequently Neptune may tumble a mountain upon this city of the Phæacians.

Besides, Minerva, to secure her care, 225
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air:

v. 225. *Besides, Minerva, to secure her care,
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air.]*

The meaning of this whole passage is probably no more than that Ulysses by his long absence had forgot the face of his own country: the woods by almost twenty years growth had a different appearance; and the public roads were altered by so great a length of time. How then should Ulysses come to the knowledge of the place? He goes to a shepherd, and by telling him a plausible story, draws it from him. This artifice is the Minerva that gives him information. By the *veil of thicken'd air* is meant, that Ulysses, to accomplish his re-establishment, took upon him a disguise, and concealed himself from the Ithacans; and this too being the dictate of wisdom, Homer ascribes it to Pallas.

The words of the original are,

— — Ὀφεί μιν αὐτὸν

ἄγνων τε ζῆεν — —

which are usually applied by interpreters to Ulysses, and mean that the Goddess disguised him with this veil, that no one might know him. Dacier is of opinion that ἄγνος ought to be used actively; that is, the Goddess acted thus to make him *unknowing* where he was, not *unknown* to the people; for that this was the effect of the veil, appears from the removal of it; for immediately upon the dispersion,

The king with joy confess'd his place of birth.

That the word ἄγνος will bear an active signification, she proves from the scholiast upon Oedipus of Sophocles. But perhaps the context will not permit this interpretation,

For so the Gods ordain'd to keep unseen
 His royal person from his friends and queen ;
 'Till the proud suitors for their crimes afford
 An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord. 230

Now all the land another prospect bore,
 Another port appear'd, another shore,
 And long-continu'd ways, and winding floods,
 And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown
 woods.

Pensive and slow with sudden grief oppress'd 235
 The king arose, and beat his careful breast,
 Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,
 And sought, around, his native realm in vain :
 Then with erected eyes stood fix'd in woe,
 And as he spoke, the tears began to flow. 240

though we should allow that the word ἀγνοῦσθαι will bear it. The passage runs thus : Pallas cast round a veil of air, that she might make him unknown, that she might instruct him, and that his wife and friends might not know him ; for thus Homer interprets ἀγνοῦσθαι in the very next line, μὴ γνοῖν ἀλοχῶσθαι. It is therefore probable that this veil had a double effect, both to render Ulysses unknown to the country, and the country to Ulysses. I am persuaded that this is the true meaning of ἀγνοῦσθαι from the usage of it in this very book of the Odyssey.

Ἄλλ', ἄγε, σ' ἀγνοῦσθαι τεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσιν

Here it can possibly signify nothing, but *I will render thee unknown to all mankind* ; it is therefore probable, that in both places it bears the same signification.

Ye Gods! he cry'd, upon what barren coast
 In what new region is Ulysses tost?
 Possess'd by wild barbarians, fierce in arms?
 Or men whose bosom tender pity warms?
 Where shall this treasure now in safety lie? 245
 And whither, whither, its sad owner fly?
 Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore?
 Ah why forsake Phæacia's happy shore?
 Some juster prince perhaps had entertain'd,
 And safe restor'd me to my native land. 250
 Is this the promis'd long-expected coast,
 And this the faith Phæacia's ruler's boast?
 Oh righteous Gods! of all the great, how few
 Are just to Heav'n, and to their promise true!
 But he, the Pow'r to whose all-seeing eyes 255
 The deeds of men appear without disguise,
 'Tis his alone t' avenge the wrongs I bear:
 For still th'oppress'd are his peculiar care.
 To count these presents, and from thence to prove
 Their faith, is mine: the rest belongs to Jove. 260

Then on the sands he rang'd his wealthy store,
 The gold, the vases, the tripods, number'd o'er:

v. 262. *The gold, the vases, the tripods number'd o'er.*]
 The conduct of Ulysses in numbering his effects has been censured by some criticks as avaricious: but we find him vindicated by Plutarch in his treatise of Reading the Poets: “ If (says that author) Ulysses finding himself in a solitary
 “ place, and ignorant of the country, and having no secu-
 “ rity even for his own person, is nevertheless chiefly so-
 “ licitous for his effects, lest any part might have been

All these he found, but still in error lost
 Disconsolate he wanders on the coast,
 Sighs for his country, and laments again 265
 To the deaf rocks, and hoarse-resounding main.
 When lo! the guardian Goddess of the wise,
 Celestial Pallas, stood before his eyes;
 In show a youthful swain, of form divine,
 Who seem'd descended from some princely line,
 A graceful robe her slender body drest, 271
 Around her shoulders flew the waving vest,
 Her decent hand a shining jav'lin bore,
 And painted sandals on her feet she wore.
 To whom the king. Whoe'er of human race
 Thou art, that wander'st in this desert place! 276
 With joy to thee, as to some God, I bend,
 To thee my treasures and myself commend.
 O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to stray,
 What air I breathe, what country I survey? 280

“ stolen; his covetousness is really to be pitied and de-
 “ tested. But this is not the case: he counts his goods
 “ merely to prove the fidelity of the Phæacians, and to
 “ gather from it, whether they had landed him upon his
 “ own country; for it was not probable that they would
 “ expose him in a strange region, and leave his goods
 “ untouched, and by consequence reap no advantage
 “ from their dishonesty: this therefore was a proper test
 “ from which to discover, if he was in his own country,
 “ and he deserved commendation for his wisdom in that
 “ action.”

The fruitful continent's extreameſt bound,
Or ſome fair iſle which Neptune's arms ſurround !

From what fair clime (ſaid ſhe) remote from fame,
Arriv'ſt thou here a ſtranger to our name ?

Thou ſeeſt an iſland, not to thoſe unknown 285

Whoſe hills are brighten'd by the riſing ſun,

Nor thoſe that plac'd beneath his utmoſt reign

Behold him ſinking in the weſtern main.

The rugged ſoil allows no level ſpace

For flying chariots, or the rapid race ; 290

Yet not ungrateful to the peaſant's pain,

Suffices fulneſs to the ſwelling grain :

The loaded trees their various fruits produce,

And cluſt'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice : 294

v. 293. *The loaded trees their various fruits produce.*] Nothing is more notorious, than that an epick writer ought to give importance and grandeur to his action as much as poſſible in every circumſtance ; here the poet takes an opportunity to ſet the country of Ulyſſes in the moſt advantageous light, and ſhews that it was a prize worth the conteſt, and all the labour which Ulyſſes beſtows to regain it. Statius is very faulty in this particular ; he declaims againſt the deſigns he aſcribes to his heroes, he debaſes his own ſubject, and ſhews that the great labour he puts them upon was ill employed for ſo wretched and pitiful a kingdom as that of Thebes. Thebaid, lib. i.

“ — — Bellum eſt de paupere regno.”

But Ulyſſes was not king of Ithaca alone, but of Zacynthus, and Cephalenia, and the neighbouring iſlands. This appears from the ſecond book of the Iliad, where he leads his ſubjects to the walls of Troy,

Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove
 The bounding goats and frisking heifers rove :
 Soft rains and kindly dews refresh the field,
 And rising springs eternal verdure yield.

With those whom Cephalenia's isle inclos'd,
 Or till'd their fields along the coast oppos'd,
 Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
 Where high Neritos shakes his waving woods,
 Where Ægilipa's rugged sides are seen,
 Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green.

It is true that Ithaca contains little more than fifty miles in circuit, now called Val de Compare; Cephalenia is larger, and is one hundred and sixty miles in circumference: Zacynthus, now Zant, is in circuit about sixty miles, unspeakably fruitful, says Sandys, producing the best oil in the world, and excellent strong wines; but the chief riches of the island consist in corinths, which the inhabitants of Zant have in such quantities that they know not what to do with them; for besides private gains, amounting to fifteen hundred thousand zechins, they yearly pay forty-eight thousand dollars for customs and other duties. It is impossible so little a portion of earth should be more beneficial.

This observation is necessary to shew the value of Ulysses's dominions, and that the subject of the *Odyssey* is not trivial and unimportant; it is likewise of use to convince us, that the domestick cares and concerns of Telemachus proceeded not from meanness, but from the manners of the age; when pomp and luxury had not yet found countenance from princes; and that when we see Eumæus, who has the charge of Ulysses's hogs, we are not to suppose him a person of low rank and fortunes, but an officer of state and trust: the riches of those ages consisting in flocks and herds, in swine and oxen.

Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd, 299
Where Troy's majestick ruins strow the ground.

At this, the chief with transport was possest,
His panting heart exulted in his breast :
Yet well dissembling his untimely joys,
And veiling truth in plausible disguise,
Thus, with an air sincere, in fiction bold, 305
His ready tale th' inventive hero told.

Oft' have I heard in Crete, this island's name ;
For 'twas from Crete my native soil I came,
Self-banish'd thence. I sail'd before the wind,
And left my children and my friends behind. 310
From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I flew :

v. 299. *Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd.*] Nothing can more raise our esteem of the judgment of Homer than such strokes of art. Here he introduces Minerva to let Ulysses into the knowledge of his country : How does she do this ? she geographically describes it to him ; so that he must almost know it by the description : but still she suppresses the name, and this keeps him in a pleasing suspense ; he attends to every syllable to hear her name Ithaca, which she still defers, to continue his doubts and hopes, and at last, in the very close of her speech, she indirectly mentions it. This discovery, in my judgment, is carried on with great address, and cannot fail of awakening the curiosity of the reader ; and I wonder how it could escape the observation of all the commentators upon the *Odyssey*.

v. 311. *From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I flew.*]

Eustathius observes, that this relation is not consonant to

With brutal force he seiz'd my Trojan prey,
 Due to the toils of many a bloody day)

antient histories but invented to make the disguised Ulysses more acceptable to the suitors, should he be brought before them. For this person whom they could not know to be Ulysses, could not fail of finding favour with them, having slain the son of Idomeneus the friend of Ulysses : and though it be not recorded by the antients, yet it may be conjectured, that Orsilochnus was thus slain, though not by Ulysses. If the death of Orsilochnus was a story that made a noise in the world about that time, it was very artful in Ulysses to make use of it, to gain credit with this seeming Ithacan ; for he relating the fact truly, might justly be believed to speak truly when he named himself the author of it, and consequently avoid all suspicion of being Ulysses. It is observable that Ulysses is very circumstantial in his story : he relates the time, the place, the manner, and the reason of his killing Orsilochnus : this is done to give the story a greater air of truth ; for it seems almost impossible that so many circumstances could be invented in a moment, and so well laid together as not to discover their own falsity. What he says concerning the Phæacians leaving his effects entire without any damage, is not spoken (as Eustathius observes) in vain : he extols the fidelity of the Phæacians, as an example to be imitated by this seeming Ithacensian, and makes it an argument that he should practise the same integrity, in not offering violence or fraud to his effects or person.

It is true, the manner of the death of Orsilochnus is liable to some objection, as it was executed clandestinely, and not heroically, as might be expected from the valour of Ulysses : but if it was a truth that Orsilochnus was killed in that manner, Ulysses could not falsify the story : but in reality he is no way concerned in it ; for he speaks in the character of a Cretan, not in the person of Ulysses.

Unseen I 'scap'd ; and favour'd by the night 315
 In a Phœnician vessel took my flight,

v. 316. *In a Phœnician vessel took my flight.*] The whole story of the voyages of Ulysses is related differently by Dictys Cretensis, in his History of the war of Troy : I will transcribe it, if not as a truth, yet as a curiosity.

“ About this time Ulysses arrived at Crete with two
 “ vessels hired of the Phœnicians : for Telamon, enraged
 “ for the death of his son Ajax, had seized upon all that
 “ belonged to Ulysses and his companions, and he himself
 “ was with difficulty set at liberty. While he was in
 “ Crete, Idomeneus asked him how he fell into such great
 “ calamities ; to whom he recounted all his adventures.
 “ He told him, that after his departure from Troy, he
 “ made an incursion upon Ismarus of the Ciconians, and
 “ there got great booty ; then touching upon the coast of
 “ the Lotophagi, he met with ill success, and sailed away
 “ to Sicily ; there Cyclops and Læstrigon, two brothers,
 “ used him barbarously ; and at length he lost most of his
 “ companions through the cruelty of Polypheme and Anti-
 “ phates, the sons of Cyclops and Læstrigon : but being
 “ afterwards received into favour by Polypheme, his com-
 “ panions attempted to carry off Arene, the king's daugh-
 “ ter, who was fallen in love with Elpenor, one of his as-
 “ sociates ; but the affair being discovered, and Ulysses
 “ dismissed, he sailed away by the Æolian islands, and
 “ came to Circe and Calypso, who were both queens of
 “ two isles : there his companions wasted some time in
 “ dalliance and pleasures : thence he sailed to a people
 “ that were famed for magical incantations, to learn his
 “ future fortunes. He escaped the rocks of the Sirens,
 “ Scylla, and Charybdis, though he there lost many of
 “ his companions ; then he fell into the hands of Phœni-
 “ cian rovers, who spared him ; and afterwards coming
 “ to Crete, he was dismissed by Idomeneus with two ves-
 “ sels, and arrived at the coast of Alcinous, who being

For Pyle or Elis bound: but tempests tost
 And raging billows drove us on your coast.
 In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,
 Spent with fatigue, and slept secure on land. 320
 But here the rosy morn renew'd the day,
 While in th' embrace of pleasing sleep I lay,

“ prevailed upon by the glory of his name, entertained
 “ him courteously: from him he learned that Penelope was
 “ addressed by thirty princes; upon this, with much in-
 “ treaty, he persuaded Alcinous to undertake a voyage to
 “ re-establish him in his territories; they set sail together,
 “ and concealing themselves with Telemachus till all things
 “ were concerted, they led their friends to the palace,
 “ and slew the suitors oppressed with sleep and drow-
 “ nings.”

The difference between the poet and the historian lies chiefly in what is here said of the death of Orfilochus; Dictys tells us, that Ulysses was entertained like a friend by Idomeneus, and Homer writes that he slew his son; now Idomeneus cannot be supposed to have favoured the murder of his son: but this is no objection, if we consider that Ulysses speaks not as Ulysses, but in a personated character, and therefore Orfilochus must be judged to have fallen by the hand of the person whose character Ulysses assumes; that is, by a Cretan, and not Ulysses.

Dictys is supposed to have served under this Idomeneus, and to have wrote an history of the Trojan war in Phœnician characters: and Tzetzes tells us, that Homer formed his poem upon his plan; but the history now extant, published by Mrs. Le Fevre, is a counterfeit: so that what I have here translated, is inserted not as an authority, but as the opinion of an unknown writer; and I lay no other weight upon it.

Sudden, invited by auspicious gales,
 They land my goods, and hoist their flying sails.
 Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore, 325
 A hapless exile on a foreign shore.

Thus while he spoke, the blue-ey'd Maid began
 With pleasing smiles to view the god-like man:
 Then chang'd her form: and now, divinely bright,
 Jove's heav'nly Daughter stood confess'd to fight.
 Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom, 331
 Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

O still the same Ulysses! she rejoin'd,
 In useful craft successfully refin'd!
 Artful in speech, in action, and in mind! 335
 Suffic'd it not, that thy long labours past
 Secure thou see'st thy native shore at last?
 But this to me? who, like thyself, excell
 In arts of counsel, and dissembling well;

v. 338. — — *Who, like thyself, excell
 In arts of counsel, and dissembling well.*]

It has been objected against Homer, that he gives a degree of dissimulation to his hero, unworthy of a brave man, and an ingenuous disposition: here we have a full vindication of Ulysses, from the mouth of the Goddess of Wisdom; he uses only a prudent dissimulation; he is *ἀρχιμήδης*, which we may almost literally render, *master of a great presence of mind*: that is, upon every emergency he finds an immediate resource to extricate himself from it. If his dissimulation had been vicious, it would have been an absurdity to have introduced Minerva praising and recommending it; on the contrary, all disguise which consists with innocence and prudence, is so far from being mean,

To me, whose wit exceeds the pow'rs divine, 340
 No less than mortals are surpass'd by thine.
 Know'st thou not me? who made thy life my care,
 Thro' ten years wand'ring, and thro' ten years war :
 Who taught thee arts, Alcinous to persuade,
 To raise his wonder, and engage his aid : 345
 And now appear, thy treasures to protect,
 Conceal thy person, thy designs direct,
 And tell what more thou must from Fate expect. }
 Domestick woes far heavier to be borne !
 The pride of fools, and slaves insulting scorn. 350
 But thou be silent, nor reveal thy state ;
 Yield to the force of unresisted fate,
 And bear unmov'd the wrongs of base mankind,
 The last, and hardest, conquest of the mind.

that it really is a praise to a person who uses it. I speak not of common life, or as if men should always act under a mask, and in disguise ; that indeed betrays design and insincerity : I only recommend it as an instance how men should behave in the article of danger, when it is as reputable to elude an enemy as to defeat one.

— — “ Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirit.”

This is the character of Ulysses, who uses only such an artifice as is suggested by wisdom, such as turns to his benefit in all extremities, such as Minerva may boast to practise without a rival among the Gods, as much as Ulysses among mankind. In short, this dissimulation in war may be called stratagem and conduct, in other exigencies address and dexterity ; nor is Ulysses criminal, but artful.

Goddess of Wisdom ! Ithacus replies,
 He who discerns thee must be truly wise,
 So seldom view'd, and ever in disguise !
 When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs,
 Against proud Ilion's well defended tow'rs ;
 Ulysses was thy care, celestial Maid ! 360
 Grac'd with thy sight, and favour'd with thy aid.
 But when the Trojan piles in ashes lay,
 And bound for Greece we plough'd the wat'ry way ;
 Our fleet dispers'd and driv'n from coast to coast,
 Thy sacred presence from that hour I lost : 365
 'Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,
 And heard thy counsels on Phæacia's shore.
 But, by th' almighty author of thy race,
 Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place ?

v. 369. *Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place?*] It may appear somewhat extraordinary that Ulysses should not believe Minerva, who had already assured him that he was landed in his own country: but two answers may be given to this objection, and his doubts may be ascribed to his having lost the knowledge of it through his long absence, for that is the veil which is cast before his eyes; or to the nature of man in general, who when he desires any thing vehemently, scarce believes himself in the possession of it, even while he possesses it. Nothing is more frequent than such expressions upon the theatre, and in the transport of an unexpected happiness, we are apt to think it a delusion; from hence the fears of Ulysses arise, and they are to be imputed to his vehement love of his country, not to his unbelief.

For much I fear, long tracts of land and sea 370

Divide this coast from distant Ithaca;

The sweet delusion kindly you impose,

To soothe my hopes, and mitigate my woes.

Thus he. The blue-ey'd Goddess thus replies.

How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise! 375

Who, vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring show,

And taste not half the blifs the Gods bestow.

The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,

And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.

Others long absent from their native place, 380

Straight seek their home, and fly with eager pace

To their wives arms, and children's dear em-
brace.

Not thus Ulysses: he decrees to prove

His subjects faith, and queen's suspected love;

Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving
years, 385

And wastes the days in grief, the nights in tears.

But Pallas knew (thy friends and navy lost,)

Once more 'twas giv'n thee to behold thy coast:

Yet how could I with adverse Fate engage,

And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage? 390

Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore

The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.

Behold the port of Phorcys! fenc'd around

With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd.

Behold the gloomy grot! whose cool recess 395

Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas:

Whose now-neglected altars, in thy reign
 Blush'd with the blood of sheep and oxen slain,
 Behold ! where Neritus the clouds divides,
 And shakes the waving forests on his sides. 400

So spake the Goddess, and the prospect clear'd,
 The mists dispers'd, and all the coast appear'd.
 The king with joy confess'd his place of birth,
 And on his knees salutes his mother earth :
 Then with his suppliant hands upheld in air, 405
 Thus to the sea-green Sisters sends his pray'r.

All hail ! ye virgin-daughters of the main !
 Ye streams, beyond my hopes beheld again !
 To you once more your own Ulysses bows ;
 Attend his transports, and receive his vows ! 410
 If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown
 The growing virtues of my youthful son,
 To you shall rites divine be ever paid,
 And grateful off'rings on your altars laid. 414

Then thus Minerva. From that anxious breast
 Dismiss those cares, and leave to Heav'n the rest.
 Our task be now thy treasur'd stores to save,
 Deep in the close recesses of the cave :
 Then future means consult - she spoke, and trod
 The shady grot, that brighten'd with the God.
 The closest caverns of the grot she sought ; 421
 The gold, the brass, the robes Ulysses brought ;
 These in the secret gloom the chief dispos'd ;
 The entrance with a rock the Goddess clos'd,

Now, seated in the olive's sacred shade, 425
 Confer the hero and the martial Maid.

The Goddess of the azure eyes began :
 Son of Laertes ! much-experienc'd man !
 The suitor-train thy earli'ft care demand,
 Of that luxurious race to rid the land: 430

Three years thy house their lawless rule has seen,
 And proud addresses to the matchless queen.
 But she thy absence mourns from day to day,
 And inly bleeds, and silent wastes away :
 Elusive of the bridal hour, she gives 435
 Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.

To this Ulysses. Oh celestial maid !
 Prais'd be thy counsel, and thy timely aid :
 Else had I seen my native walls in vain,
 Like great Atrides just restor'd and slain. 440

Vouchsafe the means of vengeance to debate,
 And plan with all thy arts the scene of fate.
 Then, then be present, and my soul inspire,
 As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n-built walls in fire.
 Tho' leagu'd against me hundred heroes stand, 445
 Hundreds shall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.

v. 445. *Tho' leagu'd against me hundreds, &c.*] Nothing is more judicious than this conduct in Homer : the whole number of suitors are to be slain by a few hands, which might shock our reason if it were related suddenly, without any preparation to shew us the probability of it : this is the intent of Homer in this and various other places of the *Odyssey* : he softens the relation, and reconciles us to it by such insertions, before he describes that great event.

She answer'd: in the dreadful day of fight
 Know, I am with thee, strong in all my might.
 If thou but equal to thyself be found,
 What gasping numbers then shall press the
 ground! 450
 What human victims stain the feastful floor!
 How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!
 It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,
 And secret walk, unknown to mortal eyes.
 For this, my hand shall wither ev'ry grace, 455
 And ev'ry elegance of form and face,

The antients (says Eustathius) would not here allow Ulysses to speak hyperbolically; he is that hero whom we have already seen in the Iliad resist whole bands of Trojans, when the Greeks were repulsed, where he slew numbers of enemies, and sustained their assaults till he was disengaged by Ajax. Besides, there is an excellent moral in what Ulysses speaks; it contains this certain truth, (adds Dacier) that a man assisted by heaven, has not only nothing to fear, but is assured to triumph over all the united powers of mankind.

v. 452. *How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!*
 The words in the Greek are ἀσπέλον ἔδαζ, which Eustathius imagines to signify the land of Ithaca; for the hall even of a palace is too narrow to be stiled *immense* or ἀσπέλον. But this contradicts the matter of fact, as appears from the place where the suitors were slain, which was not in the fields of Ithaca, but in the palace of Ulysses: ἀσπέλον really signifies large or spacious; and a palace that could entertain at one time so great a number of suitors might be called vast or ἀσπέλον, which Hesychius interprets by λίαν πολὺς, μέγας Dacier.

O'er thy smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread,
 Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,
 Disfigure ev'ry limb with coarse attire,
 And in thy eyes extinguish all the fire; 460
 Add all the wants and the decays of life,
 Estrange thee from thy own; thy son, thy wife;
 From the loath'd object ev'ry sight shall turn,
 And the blind suitors their destruction scorn.

Go first the master of thy herds to find, 465
 True to his charge, a loyal swain and kind:
 For thee he sighs; and to the royal heir
 And chaste Penelope extends his care.
 At the Coracian rock he now resides,
 Where Arethusa's fable water glides; 470

v. 465. *Go first the master of thy herds to find.*] There are many reasons why this injunction was necessary: the hero of a poem ought never to be out of sight, never out of action: neither is Ulysses idle in this recess; he goes thither to acquaint himself with the condition of his affairs, both publick and domestick: he there lays the plan for the destruction of the suitors, enquires after their numbers, and the state of Penelope and Telemachus. Besides, he here resides in full security and privacy, till he has prepared all things for the execution of the great event of the whole Odyssy.

v. 469. — — *Coracian rock* — —] This rock was so called from a young man whose name was Corax, who in pursuit of an hare fell from it and broke his neck: Arethusa his mother hearing of this accident, hanged herself by the fountain, which afterwards took its name from her, and was called Arethusa. *Eustathius.*

The fable water and the copious mast
 Swell the fat herd ; luxuriant, large repast !
 With him, rest peaceful in the rural cell,
 And all you ask his faithful tongue shall tell.
 Me into other realms my cares convey, 475
 To Sparta, still with female beauty gay :
 For know, to Sparta, thy lov'd offspring came,
 To learn thy fortunes from the voice of Fame.

At this the father, with a father's care.
 Must he too suffer ? he, oh Goddess ! bear 480 }
 Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched share ?
 Thro' the wild ocean plough the dang'rous way,
 And leave his fortunes and his house a prey ?
 Why would'st not thou, oh all-enlighten'd Mind !
 Inform him certain, and protect him, kind ? 485

To whom Minerva. Be thy soul at rest ;
 And know, whatever Heav'n ordains, is best.
 To fame I sent him, to acquire renown :
 To other regions is his virtue known.
 Secure he sits, near great Atrides plac'd ! 490
 With friendships strengthen'd, and with honours
 grac'd.

But lo ! an ambush waits his passage o'er ;
 Fierce foes insidious intercept the shore :
 In vain ! far sooner all the murth'rous brood
 This injur'd land shall fatten with their blood.

She spake, then touch'd him with her pow'rful
 wand : 496
 The skin shrunk up, and wither'd at her hand :

A fwift old age o'er all his members fspread ;
 A fudden froft was fprinkled on his head ;
 Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball fhin'd 500
 The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.
 His robe, which fspots indelible befmeat,
 In rags difhoneft flutters with the air :
 A ftag's torn hide is lapt around his reins ;
 A rugged ftaff his trembling hand fufains ; 505

v. 502. *His robe with fspots indelible befmeat, &c.*] I doubt not but Homer draws after the life. We have the whole equipage and accoutrements of a beggar, yet fo drawn by Homer, as even to retain a noblenefs and dignity: let any perfon read the description, and he will be convinced of it; what can be more lofty and fonorous than this verfe?

Ῥωβαλέα, ῥυπόωντα κακῶ μεμορυμένα καπῶν.

It is no humility to fay that a translator muft fall fhort of the original in fuch paffages; the Greek language has words noble and founding to exprefs all fubjects, which are wanting in our tongue; all that is to be expected to keep the diction from appearing mean or ridiculous. They are greatly miftaken who impute this difguife of Ulyffes in the form of a beggar, as a fault to Homer: there is nothing either abfurd or mean in it; for the way to make a king undifcoverable, is to drefs him as unlike himfelf as poffible. David counterfeited madnefs, as Ulyffes poverty, and neither of them ought to lie under any imputation; it is eafy to vindicate Homer, from the difguife of the greateft perfons and generals in hiftory, upon the like emergencies; but there is no occafion for it.

And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,
 Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.
 So look'd the chief, so mov'd! to mortal eyes
 Object uncouth! a man of miseries!
 While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air, 510
 To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.

v. 510. *While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,
 To Sparta flies — —]*

Homer is now preparing to turn the relation from Ulysses to Telemachus, whom we left at Sparta with Menelaus in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*. He has been long out of sight, and we have heard of none of his actions; Telemachus is not the hero of the poem: he is only an under-agent, and consequently the poet was at liberty to omit any or all of his adventures, unless such as have a necessary connexion with the story of the *Odyssey*, and contribute to the re-establishment of Ulysses; by this method Homer gives variety to his poetry, and breaks or gathers up the thread of it, as it tends to diversify the whole: we may consider an epick poem as a spacious garden, where there are to be different walks and views, lest the eye should be tired with too great a regularity and uniformity: the chief avenue ought to be the most ample and noble, but there should be by-walks to retire into sometimes for our ease and refreshment. The poet thus gives us several openings to draw us forward with pleasure: and though the great event of the poem be chiefly in view, yet he sometimes leads us aside into other short passages which end in it again, and bring us with pleasure to the conclusion of it. Thus, for instance, Homer begins with the story of Telemachus and the suitors: then he leaves them a-while, and more largely lays before us the adven-

tures of Ulysses, the hero of his poem; when he has satisfied the curiosity of the reader by a full narration of what belongs to him, he returns to Telemachus and the suitors: at length he unites the two stories, and proceeds directly to the end of the *Odyssey*. Thus, all the collateral and indirect passages fall into one center and main point of view. The eye is continually entertained with some new object, and we pass on from incident to incident, not only without fatigue, but with pleasure and admiration.

THE

FOURTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

VOL. III.

E

THE
A R G U M E N T.

The Conversation with Eumæus.

ULYSSES arrives in disguise at the house of Eumæus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmost hospitality. The several discourses of that faithful old servant, with the feigned story told by Ulysses to conceal himself, and other conversations on various subjects, take up this entire book.

T H E

* FOURTEENTH BOOK

O F T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

BUT he, deep-musing, o'er the mountains stray'd
Thro' mazy thickets of the woodland shade,
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,
With cliffs and nodding forests over-hung.

* We see in this book the character of a faithful, wise, benevolent old man in Eumæus; one happily innocent, unambitious, and wholly employed in rural affairs. The whole interview between Ulysses and Eumæus has fallen into ridicule; Eumæus has been judged to be of the same rank and condition with our modern swineherds. But herds and flocks were then kept and attended by the sons of kings; thus Paris watched the flocks of Priam in the groves of Ida, and the same is said of many of the heroes in the Iliad; these offices were places of dignity, and filled by persons of birth; and such was Eumæus, descended from a prince, named Ctesius: thus the master of the *horse* is a post of honour in modern ages.

It is in poetry, as in painting; where the artist does not confine himself to draw only Gods or heroes, palaces and princes; but he frequently employs his pencil in representing landscapes, rural scenes, groves, cottages, and shepherds tending their flocks.

Eumæus at his silvan lodge he fought, 5
 A faithful servant, and without a fault.

There is a passage in monsieur Boileau's reflections upon Longinus, which fully vindicates all the places of Homer that have been censured as low and too familiar. "There is nothing (observes that author) that more disgraces a composition than the use of *vulgar words* : a mean thought expressed in noble terms, is generally more taking than a noble thought debased by mean terms : the reason is, every person cannot judge of the justness and strength of a thought, but there are very few, especially in living languages, who are not shocked at mean words : and yet almost all writers fall into this fault. Longinus accuses Herodotus, the most polite of all the Greek historians, of this defect ; and Livy, Sallust, and Virgil, have fallen under the same imputation. Is it not then very surprising that no reproach upon this account has fallen upon Homer ? especially, though he has composed two large poems, and though no author has descended more frequently into the detail of little particularities ; yet he never uses terms which are not noble, or if he uses humble words or phrases, it is with so much art, that, as Dionysius Halicarnassus observes, they become noble and harmonious. We may learn from hence the ignorance of those modern criticks, who judge of the Greek without the knowledge of it ; and having never read Homer but in low and inelegant translations, impute the meannesses of the translator to the poet. Besides, the words of different languages are not exactly correspondent, and it often happens, that an expression which is noble in the Greek cannot be rendered in a version but by words that are either mean in the sound or usage. Thus *afs*, and *afinus* in Latin, are mean to the last degree ; though *αἶψα* in the Greek be used in

Ulysses found him busied, as he sat
 Before the threshold of his rustick gate ;

“ the most magnificent descriptions, and has nothing
 “ mean in it ; in like manner the terms *hogherd* and *cow-*
 “ *keeper*, are not to be used in our poetry ; but there are
 “ no finer words in the Greek language than βέκολος and
 “ σκεώτης : and Virgil, who entitles his Eclogues Bucolicks
 “ in the Roman tongue, would have been ashamed to
 “ call them in our language *the dialogues of cowkeepers.*”

Homer himself convinces us of the truth of this obser-
 vation ; nay, one would imagine that he intended in-
 dustriously to force it upon our notice ; for he frequently
 calls Eumæus ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, or *prince of men* ; and his
 common epithet is Σεῖς or Δῖς ἑφεσβός. Homer would
 not have applied these appellations to him, if he had not
 been a person of dignity ; it being the same title that he
 bestows upon his greatest heroes Ulysses or Achilles.

v. 1. *But he, deep musing, o'er the mountain stray'd.*] I
 shall transcribe the observation of Dionysius Halicarnassus
 upon the first verses in this book : the same method, re-
 marks that author, makes both prose and verse beauti-
 ful ; which consists in these three things, the judicious
 coaptation and ranging of the words, the position of the
 members and parts of the verse, and the various measure
 of the periods. Whoever would write elegantly, must
 have regard to the different turn and juncture of every
 period, there must be proper distances and pauses ; every
 verse must be a complete sentence, but broken and inter-
 rupted, and the parts made unequal, some longer, some
 shorter, to give a variety of cadence to it. Neither the
 turn of the parts of the verse, nor the length, ought to be
 alike. This is absolutely necessary : for the epick or he-
 roick verse is of a fixed determinate length, and we can-
 not, as in the lyrick, make one longer, and another
 shorter ; therefore to avoid an identity of cadence, and a

Around, the mansion in a circle shone ;
A rural portico of rugged stone :

10

perpetual return of the same periods, it is requisite to contract, lengthen, and interrupt the pause and structure of the members of the verses, to create an harmonious inequality, and out of a fixed number of syllables to raise a perpetual diversity. For instance,

Αὐτὰρ ὃ ἐκ λιμένῳ πρὸς ἕβη τρηχεῖαν ἀταρπὸν.

Here one line makes one sentence ; the next is shorter,

Χῶρον ἄν' ὑλήεντα — —

The next is still shorter,

— — δι' ἄκριας — —

The next sentence composes two hemysticks,

————— Ἡ οἱ Ἀθήνη
Πέφραδε δῖον ὑφορβὸν — —

and is entirely unlike any of the preceding periods.

————— Ὅ οἱ βιότοιο μάλισα
Κήδελο οἰκήαν ἔς κλήσαίλο δῖῳ Ὀδυσσεύς.

Here again the sentence is not finished with the former verse, but breaks into the fourth line ; and lest we should be out of breath, with the length of the sentence, the period and the verse conclude together at the end of it.

Then Homer begins a new sentence, and makes it pause differently from any of the former.

Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐνὶ προδρόμῳ εὖρ' ἤμενον —————

Then he adds,

————— Ἐνθά οἱ αὐλὴ
Ἵψηλὴ δέδμητο — — —

This is perfectly unequal to the foregoing period, and the pause of the sentence is carried forward into the second

(In absence of his Lord, with honest toil
 His own industrious hands had rais'd the pile)
 The wall was stone from neighb'ring quarries borne,
 Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
 And strong with pales, by many a weary stroke 15
 Of stubborn labour hewn from heart of oak ;

verse ; and what then follows is neither distinguished by the pauses nor parts periodically, but almost at every word there is a stop.

— — — Περὶσκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ,
 Καλήτε, μετέλληε.

No doubt but Homer was a perfect master of numbers ; a man can no more be a poet than a musician, without a good ear, as we usually express it. It is true, that versification is but the mechanism of poetry, but it sets off good sense to the best advantage ; it is a colouring that enlivens the portrait, and makes even a beauty more agreeable.

I will conclude this note, with observing what Mr. Dryden says of these two lines of Cowper's Hill.

Tho' deep, yet clear, tho' gentle, yet not dull,
 Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

“ There are few, (says he) who make verses, that have observed the sweetness of these lines, and fewer who can find the reason of it.” But I believe no one will be at a loss to solve the difficulty who considers this observation of Dionysius : and I doubt not but the chief sweetness arises from the judicious and harmonious pauses of the several periods of the verses ; not to mention the happy choice of the words, in which there is scarce one rough consonant, many liquids, and those liquids softened with a multitude of vowels.

Frequent and thick. Within the space were rear'd
 Twelve ample cells, the lodgement of his herd.
 Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd ;
 The males without (a smaller race) remain'd ; 20
 Doom'd to supply the suitors wasteful feast,
 A stock by daily luxury decreas'd ;
 Now scarce four hundred left. These to defend,
 Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
 Here sat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd 25
 To form strong buskins of well-season'd hide.
 Of four assistants who his labour share,
 Three now were absent on the rural care ;
 The fourth drove victims to the suitor train :
 But he, of antient faith, a simple swain, 30

v. 25. *Here sat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd, &c.*] I doubt not but this employment of Eumæus has been another cause of the mean character that has been formed of his condition : but this mistake arises from our judging of the dignity of men from the employments they followed three thousand years past, by the notions we have of those employments at present ; and because they are now only the occupation of the vulgar, we imagine that they were so formerly : kings and princes in the earlier ages of the world laboured in arts and occupations, and were above nothing that tended to promote the conveniencies of life ; they performed that with their own hands, which we now perform by those of our servants ; if this were not so, the cookery of Achilles in the Iliad would equally disparage that hero, as this employment would disgrace Eumæus in the Odyssey : arts were then in their infancy, and were honourable to the practisers : thus Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, as skilfully as a shipwright.

Sigh'd, while he furnish'd the luxurious board,
And weary'd heav'n with wishes for his lord.

Besides, even at this day arts are in high esteem in the oriental world, and are practis'd by the greatest personages. Every man in Turkey is of some trade; sultan Achmet was a maker of ivory rings, which the Turks wear upon their thumbs when they shoot their arrows, and in this occupation he worked several hours daily; and another of their emperors was deposed, because he refused to work in his occupation.

It must be confess'd that our translations have contributed to give those who are unacquainted with the Greek, a mean idea of Eumæus. This place is thus rendered by two of his translators.

Himself there sat ord'ring a pair of brogues,
Of a py'd bullock's skin — —

Himself was leather to his foot applying,
Made of a good cow-hide well coloured.

Whereas Homer is as lofty and harmonious, as these are flat and inelegant.

*Αὐτὸς δ' ἀμφὶ πόδεσσιν ἑοῖς ἀράγεισκε πέδιλα
Τάμνω δέσμα βέειον, ἕχρῶές.*

It is true, a translator in such places as these has an hard task; a language like the Greek, which is always flowing, musical, and sonorous, is very difficult to be imitated in other tongues, especially where the corresponding words are not equally significant and graceful.

In short, the reader is to consider this whole description as a true picture of antient life; and then he will not fail of the pleasure of knowing how the great men of antient times pass'd their lives, and how those heroes, who performed such noble parts on the publick stage of life, acted in private when withdrawn from notice and obser-

Soon as Ulysses near th' enclosure drew,
 With open mouths the furious mastives flew :
 Down sat the sage ; and cautious to withstand, 35
 Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.

vation. Those ages retained an universal simplicity of manners : Telemachus and Eumæus have both dogs for their attendants ; nay, and in later times, before luxury prevailed among the Romans, we read of a dictator brought from the plough, to lead the bravest soldiers in the world to conquer it.

v. 35. *Down sat the sage ; and cautious to withstand,
 Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.*]

Homer has been censured by representing his hero unworthily: is it probable that he who had met whole armies in battle, should now throw away his staff out of fear of a dog? that he should abandon his defence by casting himself on the ground, and leave himself to his mercy? But Eustathius fully vindicates Ulysses. It is a natural defence to avert the fury of a dog, to cast away our weapons, to shew that we intend him no violence. Pliny has the like observation in the eighth book of his Natural History: *Impetus canum & sævitia mitigatur ab homine humi confidente.*

All that Homer says of the dogs, is imitated by Theocritus, Idyll, xxv. v. 68.

Θεσπέσιον δ' ὑλάοντες ἐπέδραμον ἄλλοθεν ἄλλο
 Τῆς μὲν ἔγε λάεσσιν ἀπὸ χροῦδος ἕσσον αἰείρον
 Φεύγεμεν ἄψ' ὀπίσω δειδίσσελο, &c.

What Homer speaks of Ulysses, Theocritus applies to Hercules; a demonstration that he thought it to be a picture of nature, and therefore inserted it in that heroick Idyllium.

Sudden, the master runs ; aloud he calls ;
 And from his hasty hand the leather falls ;
 With show'rs of stones he drives them far away ;
 The scatt'ring dogs around at distance bay. 40

Unhappy stranger ! (thus the faithful swain
 Began with accent gracious and humane)

v. 37. *Sudden, the master runs, &c.*] This is thought to be an adventure that really happened to the poet himself ; it is related in the life of Homer ascribed to Herodotus. Thestorides having persuaded Homer to permit him to transcribe his verses, he immediately removed to Chios, and proclaimed himself the author : Homer being informed of it, set sail for Chios, and landing near it, he was in danger of being torn in pieces by the dogs of Glaucus, who protected him, and received him hospitably : the poet in return laboured to reward his kindness, by relating to him the most curious of his adventures that had happened in the course of his voyages. When therefore (adds Dacier) we see Ulysses entertained by Eumæus, we have the satisfaction of imagining we see Homer himself in discourse with his courteous friend Glaucus.

v. 41. — — *Thus the faithful swain, &c.*] The words in the Greek are *δῖος ἰφικλῆς*, literally rendered, *the divine swineherd*, which are burlesque in modern languages, and would have been no less in Greek, if the person of Eumæus had not been honourable, and his office a station of dignity : for the sole reason why such a translation would now be ridiculous, is because such employments are now fallen into contempt. Let any person ask this question, Would Homer have applied the epithet *divine* to a modern swineherd ? If he would not, it is an evidence that Eumæus was a man of consequence, and his post a place of honour ; otherwise Homer would have been guilty of burlesquing his own poetry.

What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate
 Thy rev'rend age had met a shameful fate ?
 Enough of woes already have I known ; 45
 Enough my master's sorrows and my own.
 While here, (ungrateful task !) his herds I feed,
 Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed ;
 Perhaps supported at another's board,
 Far from his country roams my hapless lord ! 50
 Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,
 Now cover'd with th' eternal shade of death !

But enter this my homely roof, and see
 Our woods not void of hospitality.

Dacier very well remarks, that the words Eumæus here speaks, and indeed his whole conversation, shew him to be a person of a good education, and of noble and pious sentiments ; he discovers a natural and flowing eloquence, and appears to be a man of great humanity and wisdom.

There is a peculiarity in Homer's manner of apostrophizing Eumæus, and speaking of him in the second person ; it is generally applied by that poet only to men of account and distinction, and by it the poet, as it were, addresses them with respect ; thus in the Iliad he introduces Menelaus.

Οὐδὲ σέθεν, Μενέλαε, θεοὶ ἐλάθοντο,

——— Τόνδε προσέφη Πάριόυλε,

This enlivens the diction, and awakens the attention of the reader. Eustathius observes that Eumæus is the only person of whom Homer thus speaks in the whole Odyssey : no doubt (continues that author) he does it out of love of this benevolent old servant of Ulysses ; and to honour and distinguish his fidelity.

Then tell me whence thou art? and what the
 share 55
 Of woes and wand'rings thou wert born to bear?

He said, and seconding the kind request,
 With friendly step precedes his unknown guest.
 A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,
 And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed: 60
 Joy touch'd the hero's tender soul, to find
 So just reception from a heart so kind:
 And oh, ye Gods! with all your blessings grace
 (He thus broke forth) this friend of human race!

The swain reply'd. It never was our guise 65
 To slight the poor, or aught humane despise;

v. 66. *To slight the poor, or aught humane despise;
 For Jove unfolds our hospitable door,
 'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.]*

This passage contains an admirable lecture of morality and humanity. The person who best understood the beauty of it, and best explained the precepts it comprehends, was Epictetus, from whom Monsieur Dacier furnishes us with this explication from Arrian: "Keep (says that author) continually in thy memory, what Eumæus speaks in Homer to the disguised Ulysses." *O friend, it is unlawful to despise the stranger; speak thus to thy brother, father, and neighbour: it is my duty to use you with benevolence, tho' your circumstances were meaner than they are; for you come from God.* Here we see Epictetus borrowing his morality from Homer; and philosophy embellished with the ornaments of poetry. Indeed there is scarce any writer of name among all the antients that has not been obliged to Homer, whether moralists, poets, philosophers, or legislators.

For Jove unfolds our hospitable door,
 'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.
 Little, alas ! is all the good I can ;
 A man oppress'd, dependant, yet a man : 70
 Accept such treatment as a swain affords,
 Slave to the insolence of youthful lords !
 Far hence is by unequal Gods remov'd
 That man of bounties, loving and belov'd !
 To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd, 75
 And more, had Fate allow'd, had been bestow'd :

v. 75. *To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd,
 And more, had Fate allow'd, — —]*

This passage has been greatly mistaken by almost all who have translated Homer : the words at first view seem to imply that Ulysses had given Eumæus a wife, a house, and an inheritance ; but this is not the meaning. The words are thus to be rendered ; “ Ulysses (says Eumæus) greatly “ loved me, and gave me a possession, and such things as “ an indulgent master gives a faithful servant ; namely, “ a wife, inheritance, and an house.” These gifts are to be applied to ἄναξ εἰθυμος, and not to Ulysses ; and the sentence means, that it is the custom of good kings in that manner to reward their faithful servants. It is very evident from Homer, that Ulysses had not yet given a wife to Eumæus ; for he promises him and Philætius all these rewards, lib. xxi. of the Odyssey.

Ἄξιμαι ἀμφότεροις ἀλόχους, ἢ κτήματ' ὅπασσω,
 Οἰκία τ' ἐγγύς ἐμεῖο τελευσμένα, καί μοι ἔπειτα
 Τηλεμάχῃ ἐτάρω τε, κασιγνήτῳ τε ἔσεσθον.

It appears therefore that Eumæus was not married, and therefore this whole period is to be applied to the word ἄναξ, and not to Ulysses. *Eustathius.*

But Fate condemn'd him to a foreign shore ;
 Much have I sorrow'd, but my master more.
 Now cold he lies, to death's embrace resign'd :
 Ah perish Helen ! perish all her kind ! 80
 For whose curs'd cause, in Agamemnon's name,
 He trod so fatally the paths of Fame.

His vest succinct then girding round his waste,
 Forth rush'd the swain with hospitable haste,
 Straight to the lodgements of his herd he run, 85
 Where the fat porkers slept beneath the sun ;
 Of two, his cutlance lanch'd the spouting blood ;
 These quarter'd, findg'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,
 All hasty on the hissing coals he threw ;
 And smoking back the tasteful viands drew, 90
 Broachers and all ; then on the board display'd
 The ready meal, before Ulysses laid
 With flour imbrown'd ; next mingled wine yet new,
 And luscious as the bees nectareous dew :

I will only add, that in the above-mentioned verses Ulysses promises that Eumæus shall be the companion and brother of Telemachus ; an instance, that he was not a vulgar person whom Ulysses thus honours, by making him allied to the royal family.

v. 93. *With flour imbrown'd* — —] We find here a custom of antiquity : this flour was made of parched corn ; when the antients fed upon any thing that had not been offered in sacrifice, they sprinkled it with flour, which was used instead of the hallowed barley, with which they consecrated their victims. I doubt not, (since some honours were paid to the Gods in all feasts) but that this

Then fat companion of the friendly feast, 95
 With open look ; and thus bespoke his guest.

Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,
 Such food as falls to simple servants share ;
 The best our Lords consume ; those thoughtless
 peers,

Rich without bounty, guilty without fears ! 100

Yet sure the Gods their impious acts detest,
 And honour justice and the righteous breast.

Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
 The foes of peace, and scourges of mankind,
 To whom offending men are made a prey 105

When Jove in vengeance gives a land away ;
 Ev'n these, when of their ill-got spoils possess'd,
 Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast :

Some voice of God close whisp'ring from within,
 " Wretch ! this is villany, and this is sin." 110

But these, no doubt, some oracle explore,
 That tells, the great Ulysses is no more.

Hence springs their confidence, and from our sighs
 Their rapine strengthens, and their riots rise :

Constant as Jove the night and day bestows, 115
 Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.

None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign
 O'er the fair islands of the neighb'ring main.

Nor all the monarchs whose far dreaded sway
 The wide-extended continents obey : 120

sprinkling of flour by Eumæus was an act of religion.
Dacier.

First, on the main-land, of Ulysses' breed
 Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin
 feed ;

v. 122. *Twelve herds, twelve flocks, &c.*] I have already remarked, that Ulysses was a wealthy king, and this place is an instance of it. He is master of twelve herds of oxen, which probably amounted to fourteen thousand four hundred ; for if we count the herds by the same way of computation as the droves of swine, they will make that number, each drove consisting of twelve hundred : for though Homer mentions but three hundred and sixty boars, yet he tells us, the reason why they were inferior to the females was because of the luxury of the suitors. If this be allowed, then he had likewise the same number of sheep, and as many hogs : for Eumæus had the charge only of one herd, eleven more were under the care of other officers : Ulysses likewise had thirteen thousand two hundred goats. This will appear to be a true calculation from the words of Homer, who tells us, that twenty of the greatest heroes of the age were not so wealthy as Ulysses.

The old poets and historians, to express a person of great riches, gave him the epithet of *πολυμήλων, πολυαργῶν*, or *πολύρρηνος* ; that is, “ a person that had a great number of sheep or cattle, or a person of great wealth.” This is likewise evident from the holy Scriptures : David had his officers, like Ulysses, to attend his flocks and herds : thus 1 Chron. xxvii. Jehonathan was set over his treasures in the field, cities and villages ; Shimei over his vineyards ; Zabdi over his wine-cellars ; Baal-hanan over his olive-trees, and Joash over his oil : he had herdsmen that had charge over his cattle, sheep, camels, and asses. It was by cattle that the antient kings enriched themselves from the earliest ages : thus no less a person than Pharoah, a powerful king of Ægypt, gave Joseph leave to appoint

As many stalls for shaggy goats are rear'd ;
 As many lodgements for the tusky herd ; 124
 Those foreign keepers guard : and here are seen
 Twelve herds of goats that graze our utmost green ;
 To native pastors is their charge assign'd ;
 And mine the care to feed the bristly kind :
 Each day the fattest bleeds of either herd,
 All to the suitors wasteful board preferr'd. 130

Thus he, benevolent ; his unknown guest
 With hunger keen devours the fav'ry feast ;
 While schemes of vengeance ripen in his breast. }
 Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,
 Eumæus pours on high the purple tide ; 135
 The king with smiling looks his joy exprest,
 And thus the kind inviting host address't.

Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,
 So rich, so potent, whom you style your lord ?
 Late with such affluence and possessions blest, 140
 And now in honour's glorious bed at rest.
 Whoever was the warrior, he must be
 To Fame no stranger, nor perhaps to me ;

his brethren to be rulers over his cattle ; and we read in all the Greek poets, that the wealth of kings originally consisted in herds and flocks. They lose much of the pleasure of Homer who read him only as a poet : he gives us an exact image of antient life, their manners, customs, laws, and politicks ; and it must double our satisfaction, when we consider that in reading Homer we are reading the most antient author in the world, except the great lawgiver Moses.

Who (so the Gods, and so the Fates ordain'd)
 Have wander'd many a sea, and many a land. 145

Small is the faith, the prince and queen ascribe
 (Reply'd Eumæus) to the wand'ring tribe.

For needy strangers still to flatt'ry fly,
 And want too oft' betrays the tongue to lye.
 Each vagrant traveller that touches here, 150

Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,
 To dear remembrance makes his image rise,
 And calls the springing sorrows from her eyes.

Such thou may'st be. But he whose name you crave
 Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave, 155

Or food for fish, or dogs, his reliques lie,
 Or torn by birds are scatter'd thro' the sky.

So perish'd he: and left (for ever lost)
 Much woe to all, but sure to me the most.

So mild a master never shall I find; 160 }
 Less dear the parents whom I left behind,
 Less soft my mother, less my father kind. }

Not with such transport wou'd my eyes run o'er,
 Again to hail them in their native shore;
 As lov'd Ulysses once more to embrace, 165

Restor'd and breathing in his natal place.

That name for ever dread, yet ever dear,

Ev'n in his absence I pronounce with fear:

v. 167. *That name for ever dread, &c.*] Eustathius excellently explains the sentiment of Eumæus, which is full of tenderness and humanity. I will not call Ulysses, cries Eumæus, by the name of Ulysses, for from strangers he

In my respect, he bears a prince's part ;
But lives a very brother, in my heart. 170

Thus spoke the faithful swain, and thus rejoin'd
The master of his grief, the man of patient mind.

Ulysses, friend ! shall view his old abodes,
(Distrustful as thou art) nor doubt the Gods.
Nor speak I rashly, but with faith averr'd, 175

And what I speak attesting Heav'n has heard.
If so, a cloak and vesture be my meed ;
'Till his return, no title shall I plead,
Tho' certain be my news, and great my need. }
Whom want itself can force untruths to tell, 180
My soul detests him as the gates of hell.

Thou first be witness, hospitable Jove !
And ev'ry God inspiring social love ;
And witness ev'ry household pow'r that waits
Guard of these fires, and angel of these gates ! 185

receives that appellation ; I will not call him my master, for as such he never was towards me ; I will then call him brother, for he always used me with the tenderness of a brother. Ἠθεῖος properly signifies an elder brother.

What I would further observe is, the wonderful art of Homer in exalting the character of his hero : he is the bravest and the best of men, good in every circumstance of life : valiant in war, patient in adversity, a kind father, husband, and master, as well as a mild and merciful king : by this conduct the poet deeply engages our affections in the good or ill fortune of the hero : he makes himself master of our passions, and we rejoice or grieve at his success or calamity through the whole *Odyssey*.

Ere the next moon increase, or this decay,
His antient realms Ulysses shall survey,

v. 186. *Ere the next moon increase, or this decay.*] These verses have been thought to be used ænigmatically by Ulysses.

τῆ δ' αὐτῆ λυκάβανι Ⓞ ἐλεύσεσθαι ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς,
τῆ μὲν φθίνοντι Ⓞ μηνός, τῆ δ' ἰσαμένοιο.

In the former verse Eustathius tells us there is a various reading, and judges that it ought to be written τῆ δ' αὐτῆ, and not τῆ δ' αὐτῆ; and it must be allowed that the repetition of τῆ gives a greater emphasis to the words, and agrees better with the vehemence of the speaker in making his asseveration.

The latter verse in the obvious sense seems to mean that Ulysses would return in the space of a month, and so Eumæus understood it; but in reality it means in the compass of a day. Solon was the first who discovered the latent sense of it, as Plutarch informs us: “ Solon, says
“ that author, observing the inequality of the months,
“ and that the moon neither agreed with the rising or
“ setting of the sun, but that often in the same day she
“ over-took and went before it, named that same day
“ ἐν ἡ ἰεῖα, *the old and new moon*; and allotted that part of
“ the day that preceded the conjunction, to the old moon,
“ and the other part of it to the new; from hence we
“ may judge that he was the first that comprehended the
“ sense of this verse of Homer.

τῆ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνός, τῆ δ' ἰσαμένοιο.

“ accordingly he named the following day, *the day of the*
“ *new moon*. Ulysses then means that he will return on
“ the last day of the month, for on that day the moon
“ is both old and new; that is, she finishes one month,
“ and begins another.” This is taken from the life of
Solon; but whether the obvious sense in which Eumæus

In blood and dust each proud oppressor mourn,
And the lost glories of his house return.

Nor shall that meed be thine, nor ever more 190
Shall lov'd Ulysses hail this happy shore,
(Reply'd Eumæus :) to the present hour
Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.
From sad reflection let my soul repose ;
The name of him awakes a thousand woes. 195
But guard him Gods ! and to these arms restore !
Not his true comfort can desire him more ;
Not old Laertes, broken with despair ;
Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.
Alas, Telemachus ! my sorrows flow 200
Afresh for thee, my second cause of woe !
Like some fair plant set by a heav'nly hand,
He grew, he flourish'd, and he blest the land ;
In all the youth his father's image shin'd,
Bright in his person, brighter in his mind. 205

is supposed to understand it, or the latent meaning of Solon be preferable, is submitted to the reader's judgment; I confess I see no occasion to have recourse to that mysterious explication: what Ulysses intended was to certify Eumæus, that Ulysses would assuredly return very speedily; and the verse will have this effect, if it be understood literally and plainly: besides, Ulysses is to continue in an absolute disguise; why then should he endanger a discovery, by using an ambiguous sentence, which might possibly be understood? But if it was so dark that it was utterly unintelligible to Eumæus, then it is used in vain, and a needless ambiguity.

What man, or God, deceiv'd his better sense,
 Far on the swelling seas to wander hence?
 To distant Pylos hapless is he gone,
 To seek his father's fate, and find his own!
 For traitors wait his way, with dire design 210
 To end at once the great Arceſian line.
 But let us leave him to their wills above;
 The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.
 And now, my venerable gueſt! declare 214
 Your name, your parents, and your native air:
 Sincere from whence begun your courſe relate,
 And to what ſhip I owe the friendly freight?

Thus he: and thus (with prompt invention bold)
 The cautious chief his ready ſtory told.

On dark reſerve what better can prevail, 220
 Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale,
 Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place
 Confer, and wines and cates the table grace;
 But moſt, the kind inviter's chearful face? }
 Thus might we fit, with ſocial goblets crown'd,
 'Till the whole circle of the year goes round; 226
 Not the whole circle of the year wou'd cloſe
 My long narration of a life of woes.

But ſuch was Heav'n's high will! Know then, I came
 From ſacred Crete, and from a fire of Fame: 230

v. 229. — — *Know then, I came*
From ſacred Crete, — —]

This whole narration is a notable inſtance of that artful diſſimulation ſo remarkable in the character of Ulyſſes,

Castor Hylacides (that name he bore)
 Belov'd and honour'd in his native shore ;
 Blest in his riches, in his children more.

}

and an evidence that Homer excellently sustains it through the whole poem ; for Ulysses appears to be *πολύτροπος*, as he is represented in the first line, throughout the *Odyssey*. This narrative has been both praised and censured by the criticks, especially by Rapin. I will lay his observations before the reader.

“ Homer is guilty of verbosity, and of a tedious prolix
 “ manner of speaking. He is the greatest talker of all
 “ antiquity : the very Greeks, though chargeable with
 “ an excess this way above all nations, have reprehended
 “ Homer for his intemperance of words ; he is ever upon
 “ his rehearsals, and not only of the same words, but of
 “ the same things, and consequently is in a perpetual
 “ circle of repetitions. It is true he always speaks natu-
 “ rally, but then he always speaks too much : his ad-
 “ ventures in *Ægypt*, which he relates to Eumæus, are
 “ truly idle impertinent stories, purely for amusement :
 “ there is no thread in his discourse, nor does it seem to
 “ tend to any proposed end, but exceeds all bounds : that
 “ vast fluency of speech, and those mighty overflowings
 “ of fancy, make him shoot beyond the mark. Hence
 “ his draughts are too accurate, and leave nothing to be
 “ performed by the imagination of the reader, a fault
 “ which (as Cicero observes) Apelles found in the antient
 “ painters.” This objection is intended only against the
 fullness of Homer’s expression, not against the subject of
 the narration ; for Rapin in another place speaking of the
 beauties of Homer, gives this very story as an instance
 of his excellency. These are his words :

“ I shall say nothing of all the relations which Ulysses
 “ makes to Eumæus upon his return to his country, and
 “ his wonderful management to bring about his re-estab-

Sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,
I shar'd his kindness with his lawful race: 235

“ lishment ; the whole story is dress'd in colours so decent,
“ and at the same time so noble, that antiquity can hard-
“ ly match any part of the narration.”

If what Rapin remarks in the latter period be true, Homer will easily obtain a pardon for the fault of prolixity, imputed to him in the aforementioned objection. For who would be willing to retrench one of the most decent and noble narrations of antiquity, merely for the length of it ? But it may, perhaps, be true that this story is not impertinent, but well suited to carry on the design of Ulysses, and consequently tends to a proposed end : for in this consists the strength of Rapin's objection.

Nothing is more evident than that the whole success of Ulysses depends upon his disguise ; a discovery would be fatal to him, and at once give a single unassisted person into the power of his enemies. How then is this disguise to be carried on ? especially when Ulysses in person is required to give an account of his own story ? Must it not be by assuming the name of another person, and giving a plausible relation of his life, fortunes, and calamities, that brought him to a strange country, where he has no acquaintance or friend ? This obliges him to be circumstantial, nothing giving a greater air of probability than descending to particularities, and this necessitates his prolixity. The whole relation is comprehended in the compass of an hundred and seventy lines ; and an episode of no greater length may not perhaps deserve to be called *verbose*, if compared with the length of the *Odyssey* : nay, there may be a reason given why it ought to be of a considerable length : there is a pause in the action, while *Mīnerva* passes from *Ithaca* to *Telemachus* in *Lacedæmon* : this interval is to be filled up with some incident relating to *Ulysses*, until *Telemachus* is prepared to return ; for

But when that fate, which all must undergo,
 From earth remov'd him to the shades below ;
 The large domain his greedy sons divide,
 And each was portion'd as the lots decide.

Little alas ! was left my wretched share, 240

Except a house, a covert from the air :
 But what by niggard fortune was deny'd,
 A willing widow's copious wealth supply'd.

his assistance is necessary to re-establish the affairs of Ulysses. This then is a time of leisure, and the poet fills it up with the narrations of Ulysses till the return of Telemachus, and consequently there is room for a long relation. Besides (remarks Eustathius) Homer interests all men of all ages in the story, by giving us pieces of true history, antient customs, and exact descriptions of persons and places, instructive and delightful to all the world, and these incidents are adorned with all the embellishments of eloquence and poetry.

v. 234. *Sprung of a handmaid* — —] Ulysses says he was the son of a concubine: this was not a matter of disgrace among the antients, concubinage being allowed by the laws.

The sons cast lots for their patrimony, an evidence that this was the practice of the antient Greeks. Hence an inheritance had the name *κληρονομία*, that is, from the lots; parents put it to the decision of the lot, to avoid the envy and imputation of partiality in the distribution of their estates. It has been judged that the poet writes according to the Athenian laws, at least this custom prevailed in the days of Solon; for he forbid parents who had several legitimate sons to make a will, but ordered that all the legitimate sons should have an equal share of their father's effects. *Eustathius*.

My valour was my plea, a gallant mind
 That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind, 245 }
 (The sex is ever to a soldier kind.)
 Now wasting years my former strength confound,
 And added woes have bow'd me to the ground ;
 Yet by the stubble you may guess the grain,
 And mark the ruins of no vulgar man. 250
 Me, Pallas gave to lead the martial storm,
 And the fair ranks of battle to deform :
 Me, Mars inspir'd to turn the foe to flight,
 And tempt the secret ambush of the night.
 Let ghastly death in all his forms appear, 255
 I saw him not ; it was not mine to fear.
 Before the rest I rais'd my ready steel ;
 The first I met, he yielded, or he fell.
 But works of peace my soul disdain'd to bear,
 The rural labour, or domestick care. 260

v. 259. — — *My soul disdain'd to bear,*
The rural labour — — —]

Plutarch, in his comparison of Aristides and Cato, cites these verses,

— — ἔργον δέ μοι ἐ φίλον ἔσκεν.
 Οὐδ' οἰκωφελίη, &c.

and tells us, that they who neglect their private and domestick concerns, usually draw their subsistence from violence and rapine. This is certainly a truth : men are apt to supply their wants, occasioned by idleness, by plunder and injustice : but it is as certain that no reflection is in-

To raise the mast, the missile dart to wing,
 And send swift arrows from the bounding string,
 Were arts the Gods made grateful to my mind ;
 Those Gods, who turn (to various ends design'd) }
 The various thoughts and talents of mankind. }
 Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain, 266
 Nine times commander or by land or main,
 In foreign fields I spread my glory far,
 Great in the praise, rich in the spoils of war :
 Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame,
 To Crete return'd, an honourable name. 271
 But when great Jove that direful war decreed,
 Which rous'd all Greece, and made the mighty
 bleed ;

Our states myself and Idomen employ
 To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy. 275
 Nine years we warr'd ; the tenth saw Ilion fall ;
 Homeward we sail'd, but Heav'n dispers'd us all.
 One only month my wife enjoy'd my stay ;
 So will'd the God who gives and takes away.
 Nine ships I mann'd, equipp'd with ready stores,
 Intent to voyage to th' Ægyptian shores ; 281

tended to be cast upon this way of living by Ulysses, for in his age piracy was not only allowable, but glorious ; and sudden inroads and incursions were practis'd by the greatest heroes. Homer therefore only intends to shew that the disposition of Ulysses inclined him to pursue the more dangerous, but more glorious, way of living by war, than the more lucrative, but more secure method of life, by agriculture and husbandry.

In feast and sacrifice my chosen train
 Six days consum'd ; the seventh we plough'd the
 main.

Crete's ample fields diminish to our eye ;
 Before the Boreal blasts the vessels fly ; 285

Safe thro' the level seas we sweep our way ;
 The steer-man governs, and the ships obey.

The fifth fair morn we stem th' Ægyptian tide :
 And tilting o'er the bay the vessels ride :

To anchor there my fellows I command, 290
 And spies commission to explore the land.

But sway'd by lust of gain, and headlong will,
 The coasts they ravage, and the natives kill.

The spreading clamour to their city flies,
 And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise. 295

The red'ning dawn reveals the circling fields
 Horrid with bristly spears, and glancing shields.

Jove thunder'd on their side. Our guilty head
 We turn'd to flight ; the gathering vengeance
 spread 299

On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lie dead.

I then explor'd my thought, what course to prove ?

(And sure the thought was dictated by Jove,

Oh had he left me to that happier doom,

And sav'd a life of miseries to come !)

The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd, 305

And low on earth my shield and javelin cast,

I meet the monarch with a suppliant's face,

Approach his chariot, and his knees embrace.

He heard, he fav'd, he plac'd me at his side ;
 My state he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd, 310
 Refrain'd the rage the vengeful foe exprest,
 And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breast.
 Pious ! to guard the hospitable rite,
 And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight.

In Ægypt thus with peace and plenty blest, 315
 I liv'd (and happy still had liv'd) a guest,
 On sev'n bright years successive blessings wait ;
 The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.
 A false Phœnician of insidious mind,
 Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to humankind, 320
 With semblance fair invites me to his home ;
 I seiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam)
 Domestick in his faithless roof I stay'd,
 'Till the swift sun his annual circle made.
 To Lybia then he meditates the way ; 325
 With guileful art a stranger to betray,
 And fell to bondage in a foreign land :
 Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the strand.
 Thro' the mid seas the nimble pinnace sails,
 Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales : 330
 But when remote her chalky cliffs we lost,
 And far from ken of any other coast,
 When all was wild expanse of sea and air ;
 Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to pre-
 pare,
 He hung a night of horrors o'er their head, 335
 (The shaded ocean blacken'd as it spread)

He lanch'd the fiery bolt; from pole to pole
 Broad burst the lightnings, deep the thunders roll;
 In giddy rounds the whirling ship is tost,
 And all in clouds of smoth'ring sulphur lost. 340
 As from a hanging rock's remendous height,
 The sable crows with intercepted flight
 Drop endlong; scarr'd and black with fulph'rous
 hue :

So from the deck are hurl'd the ghastly crew.
 Such end the wicked found ! But Jove's intent
 Was yet to save th' oppress'd and innocent. 346
 Plac'd on the mast (the last recourse of life)
 With winds and waves I held unequal strife ;
 For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,
 The tenth soft wafts me to Thesprotia's shore. 350
 The monarch's son a shepwreckt wretch reliev'd,
 The fire with hospitable rites receiv'd,
 And in his palace like a brother plac'd,
 With gifts of price and gorgeous garments
 grac'd.

While here I sojourn'd, oft' I heard the fame 355
 How late Ulysses to the country came,
 How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he stay'd,
 And here his whole collected treasure lay'd ;
 I saw myself the vast unnumber'd store
 Of steel elab'rate, and refulgent ore, 360
 And brass high heap'd amidst the regal dome ;
 Immense supplies for ages yet to come !

Meantime he voyag'd to explore the will
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill,

v. 363 — — *He voyag'd to explore the will
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill.]*

These oaks of Dodona were held to be oraculous, and to be endued with speech, by the antients; and pigeons were supposed to be the priestesses of the Deity. Herodotus in Euterpe gives a full account of what belongs to this oracle, who tells us, that he was informed by the priestesses of Dodona, that two black pigeons flew away from Thebes in Egypt, and one of them perching upon a tree in Dodona, admonished the inhabitants with a human voice, to erect an oracle in that place to Jupiter. But Herodotus solves this fable after the following manner: “ There were two priestesses carried away from Ægypt, “ and one of them was sold by the Phœnicians in Greece, “ where she in her servitude consecrated an altar to Ju- “ piter under an oak; the Dodonæans gave her the “ name of a pigeon because she was a barbarian, and her “ speech at first no more understood than the chattering “ of a bird or pigeon; but as soon as she had learned “ the Greek tongue, it was presently reported that the “ pigeon spoke with an human voice. She had the epi- “ thet *Black*, because she was an Ægyptian.”

Eustathius informs us, that Dodona was antiently a city of Thesprotia; and in process of time the limits of it being changed, it became of the country of the Molossians, that is, it lay between Thessaly and Epirus. Near this city was a mountain named Timarus or Timourus: on this mountain there stood a temple, and within the precincts of it were these oraculous oaks of Jupiter: this was the most antient temple of Greece, according to Herodotus, founded by the Pelasgians, and at first served by priests called Selli; and the Goddess Dione being joined with Jupiter in the worship, the service was performed by three

What means might best his safe return avail, 365
To come in pomp, or bear a secret sail ?

aged priestesses, called in the Molossian tongue *πέλειαι*, as old men were called *πέλειοι*, (perhaps from the corrupted word *πάλαιοι*, or antients) and the same word *πέλειαι* signifying also pigeons, gave occasion to the fable of the temple of Dodona having doves for priestesses. But if, as Herodotus affirms, the Phœnicians sold this priestess of Jupiter originally to the Greeks, it is probable they were called doves, after the Phœnician language, in which the same word, with a small alteration, signifies both a dove and a priestess. See note on v. 75. of the twelfth *Odyssey*.

Eustathius gives us another solution of this difficulty, and tells us, that as there were *κορακομάντιες*, or *augurs*, who drew predictions from the flight and gestures of crows; so there were others who predicted from observations made upon doves; and from hence these doves were called the prophetesses of Dodona, that being the way by which the decrees of the Gods were discovered by the augurs.

I have remarked that the temple of Dodona stood upon the mountain Timourus; hence the word *τίμυραι* came to signify those oracles, and thus *τίμυρῶν* is used by Lycophron. Now Homer in another place writes,

Εἴ γε μὲν αἰνήσῃσι Διὸς μεγάλιοιο θέρμιςες.

Strabo therefore, instead of *θέρμιςες*, reads *τίμυραι*; for, observes that author, the oracles, not the laws of Jupiter, are preserved at Dodona. *Eustathius*.

But whence arose the fable of these oaks being vocal? I doubt not but this was an illusion of those who gave out the oracles to the people: they concealed themselves within the cavities or hollow of the oaks, and from thence delivered their oracles; and imposing by this method upon the superstition and credulity of those ages, persuaded the world that the Gods gave a voice and utterance to the oaks.

Full oft' has Phidon, whilst he pour'd the wine,
 Attesting solemn all the Pow'rs divine,
 That soon Ulysses would return, declar'd,
 The sailors waiting, and the ships prepar'd. 370
 But first the king dismiss'd me from his shores,
 For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful stores;
 To good Acastus' friendly care consign'd:
 But other counsels pleas'd the sailors mind:
 New frauds were plotted by the faithless train,
 And misery demands me once again. 376
 Soon as remote from shore they plough the wave,
 With ready hands they rush to seize their slave;
 Then with these tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,
 (Stript of my own) and to the vessel bound. 380
 At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land
 The ship arriv'd: forth-issuing on the sand
 They sought repast; while to th' unhappy kind,
 The pitying Gods themselves my chains unbind.
 Soft I descended, to the sea apply'd 385
 My naked breast, and shot along the tide.
 Soon past beyond their sight, I left the flood,
 And took the spreading shelter of the wood.
 Their prize escap'd the faithless pirates mourn'd;
 But deem'd enquiry vain, and to their ship re-
 turn'd. 390

I refer the reader, for a larger account of these Dodonæan oracles, to the annotations upon book xvi. verse 285. of the Iliad.

Screen'd by protecting Gods from hostile eyes,
 They led me to a good man and a wife ;
 To live beneath thy hospitable care,
 And wait the woes Heav'n dooms me yet to bear.

v. 391. *Screen'd by protecting Gods from hostile eyes,
 They led me to a good man and a wife.]*

This is a very artful compliment which Ulysses pays to Eumæus: *The Gods guided me to the habitation of a person of wisdom*, and names not Eumæus, leaving it to him to apply it.

I doubt not but the reader agrees with Ulysses as to the character of Eumæus; there is an air of piety to the Gods in all he speaks, and benevolence to mankind; he is faithful to his king, upright in his trust, and hospitable to the stranger.

Dacier is of opinion, that ἀρετὴς ἐστὶν ἀμείνιο takes in virtue as well as wisdom; and indeed Homer frequently joins νόημονες ἢ δὲ δίκαιοι, and ἀδαήμονες ἢ δὲ δίκαιοι; that is, wisdom and virtue, folly and impiety, throughout the *Odyssey*. *For never, never wicked man was wise.* Virtue in a great measure depends upon education: it is a science, and may be learned like other sciences; in reality, there is no knowledge that deserves the name without virtue; if virtue be wanting, science becomes artifice: as Plato demonstrates from Homer; who, though he is an enemy to this poet, has enriched his writings with his sentiments.

v. 394. *And wait the woes Heav'n dooms me yet to bear.]*
 It may not perhaps be unsatisfactory to see how Ulysses keeps in sight of truth through this whole fabulous story.

He gives a true account of his being at the war of Troy; he stays seven years in Ægypt, so long he continued with Calypso; the king of Ægypt, whose name Eu-

Unhappy guest! whose sorrows touch my mind! 395
 (Thus good Eumæus with a sigh rejoïn'd)
 For real suff'rings since I grieve sincere,
 Check not with fallacies the springing tear;
 Nor turn the passion into groundless joy
 For him, whom Heav'n has destin'd to destroy. 400
 Oh! had he perisht on some well-fought day,
 Or in his friends embraces dy'd away!
 That grateful Greece with streaming eyes might
 raise
 Historick marbles, to record his praise:

stathius tells us was Sethon, according to the antients, entertains him hospitably like that Goddess; a Phœnician detains him a whole year; the same has been observed of Circe; the vessel of this Phœnician is lost by a storm, and all the crew perishes except Ulysses: the same is true of all the companions of Ulysses. He is thrown upon the land of the Thesprotians by that tempest, and received courteously by Phidon, the king of that country; this represents his being cast upon the Phæacian shore by the storm, and the hospitable Phidon means Alcinous, king of the Phæacians: the manner likewise of his being introduced to Phidon, agrees with his introduction to Alcinous; the daughter introduces him to Alcinous, and the son to Phidon. Thus we see there is a *concordia discors* through the whole narration, the poet only changing the names of persons and places. Ulysses lay under an absolute necessity thus to falsify his true history, and represent himself as a stranger to the whole Island of Ithaca, otherwise it would have been natural for Eumæus to offer to guide him to his friends, upon which a discovery must inevitably have followed, which would have proved fatal to that hero.

His praise, eternal on the faithful stone, 405
 Had with transmissive honours grac'd his son.
 Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
 Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost!
 While pensive in this solitary den,
 Far from gay cities, and the ways of men, 410
 I linger life ; nor to the court repair,
 But when the constant queen commands my care ;

v. 407. *Now snatch'd by harpies — —*] This place seems to evince, that the expression of being torn by the harpies, means that the dead person is deprived of the rites of sepulture ; and not as Dacier understands it, that he is disappeared, or that it is unknown what is become of him : for the whole lamentation of Eumæus turns upon this point, namely, that Ulysses is dead, and deprived of the funeral ceremonies.

v. 411. — — *Nor to the court repair,
 But when the queen — —*]

It may appear, at first view, as if Eumæus thought his absence from the court an aggravation to his calamities : but this is not his meaning : he speaks thus to prevent Ulysses from asking him to introduce him immediately to Penelope ; and this is the reason why he enlarges upon the story of the Ætolian, who had deceived him by raising his immediate expectations of the return of Ulysses.

It is remarkable, that almost all these fictions are made by Cretans, or have some relation to the island of the Cretans : thus Ulysses feigns himself to be of Crete, and this Ætolian lays the scene of his falsehood in the same island : which, as Eustathius observes, may possibly be a latent satyr upon that people, who were become a reproach and proverb for their remarkable lying. This agrees exactly

A few revolving months shou'd waft him o'er,
 Fraught with bold warriors, and a boundless store.
 O thou! whom age has taught to understand,
 And Heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand! 426

On God or mortal to obtrude a lie
 Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.
 Not for such ends my house and heart are free,
 But dear respect to Jovè, and charity. 430

And why, oh swain of unbelieving mind!
 (Thus quick reply'd the wisest of mankind)
 Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,
 A solemn compact let us ratify,
 And witness ev'ry Pow'r that rules the sky! 435

If here Ulysses from his labours rest,
 Be then my prize a tunick and a vest;
 And, where my hopes invite me, straight transport
 In safety to Dulichium's friendly court.

But if he greets not thy desiring eye, 440
 Hurl me from yon' dread precipice on high;
 The due reward of fraud and perjury. }

Doubtless, oh guest! great laud and praise were
 mine

(Reply'd the swain for spotless faith divine)
 If, after social rites and gifts bestow'd, 445
 I stain'd my hospitable hearth with blood,
 How would the Gods my righteous toils succeed,
 And bless the hand that made a stranger bleed?
 No more—th' approaching hours of silent night
 First claim refection, then to rest invite; 450

Beneath our humble cottage let us haste,
And here, unenvy'd, rural dainties taste.

Thus commun'd these; while to their lowly
dome

The full-fed swine return'd with evening home;
Compell'd, reluctant, to their sev'ral sties, 455
With din obstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.

Then to the slaves—Now from the herd the best
Select, in honour of our foreign guest:

With him, let us the genial banquet share,
For great and many are the griefs we bear; 460
While those who from our labours heap their board,
Blaspheme their feeder, and forget their lord.

v. 455. *Compell'd, reluctant, to their sev'ral sties,
With din obstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.]*

There is scarce a more sonorous verse in the whole *Odyssey*.

κλαγγὴ δ' ἀσπέλιον ὤρετο συῶν ἀυλιζομένων.

The word swine is what debases our idea; which is evident, if we substitute *Shepherd* in the room of *Hogherd*, and apply to it the most pompous epithet given by Homer to Eumæus. For instance, to say δῖον, or the illustrious hogherd is mean enough: but the image is more tolerable when we say, the illustrious shepherd; the office of a shepherd (especially as it is familiarized and dignified in poetry by the frequent use of it) being in repute. The Greeks have magnificent words to express the most common objects: we want words of equal dignity, and have the disadvantage of being obliged to endeavour to raise a subject that is now in the utmost contempt, so as to guard it from meanness and ignominy.

Thus speaking, with dispatchful hand he took
 A weighty ax, and cleft the solid oak ;
 This on the earth he pil'd ; a boar full fed 465
 Of five years age, before the pile was led :
 The swain, whom acts of piety delight,
 Observant of the Gods begins the rite ;
 First shears the forehead of the bristly boar,
 And suppliant stands, invoking ev'ry Pow'r 470 }
 To speed Ulysses to his native shore.

v. 469. *First shears the forehead of the bristly boar.*] I have already observed, that every meal among the antients was a kind of sacrifice and thanksgiving to the Gods; and the table, as it were, an altar.

This sacrifice being different from any other in Homer, I will fully describe the particulars of it from Eustathius. It is a rural sacrifice; we have before seen sacrifices in camps, in courts, and in cities, in the Iliad; but this is the only one of this nature in all Homer.

They cut off the hair of the victim in commemoration of the original way of cloathing, which was made of hair and the skins of beasts.

Eumæus strows flour upon it; in remembrance, that before incense was in use, this was the antient manner of offering to the Gods, or as Dacier observes, of consecrating the victim, instead of the barley mixed with salt, which had the name of immolation.

Eumæus cut a piece from every part of the victim; by this he made it an *holocaust*, or an entire sacrifice.

Eumæus divides the rest at supper; which was always the office of the most honourable person; and thus we see Achilles and other heroes employed throughout the Iliad. He portions it into seven parts; one he allots to Mercury

A knotty stake then aiming at his head,
 Down dropp'd he groaning, and the spirit fled.
 The scorching flames climb round on ev'ry side;
 Then the findg'd members they with skill divide;
 On these, in rolls of fat involv'd with art, 476
 The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.
 Some in the flames bestrow'd with flour, they
 threw:

Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew;
 These while on sev'ral tables they dispose, 480
 As priest himself the blameless rustick rose;
 Expert the destin'd victim to dis-part
 In sev'n just portions, pure of hand and heart.
 One sacred to the Nymphs apart they lay;
 Another to the winged son of May: 485

and the Nymphs, and the rest he reserves for himself, Ulysses, and his four servants. He gives the chine to Ulysses, which was ever reputed an honour and distinction; thus Ajax after a victory over Hector, is rewarded in the same manner.

Νώτοισι δ' Αἴαιλα δινυμένεσσι γέγραπεν.
 Ἄτρείδης.

v. 484. *One sacred to the Nymphs — —
 Another to the winged son of May.]*

It may be asked why Eumæus allots part of the victim to Mercury and the Nymphs, since there is nothing of the like nature to be found in the whole Iliad and Odyssey? This is done in compliance to the place and person of Eumæus, whose employment lies in the country, and

The rural tribe in common share the rest,
 The king the chine, the honour of the feast,
 Who sat delighted at his servant's board ;
 The faithful servant joy'd his unknown lord.
 Oh be thou dear, (Ulysses cry'd) to Jove, 490
 As well thou claim'st a grateful stranger's love !

Be then thy thanks, (the bounteous swain reply'd)
 Enjoyment of the good the Gods provide.

who has the care of the herds of Ulysses ; he therefore offers to the Nymphs, as they are the presidents of the fountains, rivers, groves, and furnish sustenance and food for cattle : and Mercury was held by the antients to be the patron of shepherds. Thus Simonides,

Θύειν Νύμφαις ἢ Μαιάδ' ἔτιμα
 Ὅττοι γὰρ ἀνδρῶν αἶμα ἔχουσι ποιμαίνων.

Eustathius adds, (from whom this is taken) that Mercury was a lucrative God, and therefore Eumæus sacrifices to him for increase of his herds : or because he was δόλι' ἔργου, and, like Ulysses, master of all the arts of cunning and dissimulation, and then Eumæus may be understood to offer to him for the safety of Ulysses, that he might furnish him with artifice to bring him in security to his country ; and we see this agrees with his prayer.

What Dacier adds is yet more to the purpose. Eumæus joins Mercury with the Nymphs because he was patron of flocks, and the antients generally placed the figure of a ram at the base of his images ; sometimes he is represented carrying a ram upon his arms, sometimes upon his shoulders : in short it suffices that he was esteemed a rural Deity, to make the sacrifice proper to be offered to him by a person whose occupation lay in the country.

From God's own hand descend our joys and woes ;
 These he decrees, and he but suffers those : 495
 All pow'r is his, and whatsoe'er he wills,
 The will itself, omnipotent, fulfills.
 This said, the first-fruits to the Gods he gave ;
 Then pour'd of offer'd wine the sable wave :
 In great Ulysses' hand he plac'd the bowl, 500
 He sat, and sweet refection cheer'd his soul.
 The bread from canisters Mefaulius gave,
 (Eumæus' proper treasure bought this slave,
 And led from Taphos, to attend his board,
 A servant added to his absent lord) 505

v. 504. — — *And led from Taphos.*] This custom of purchasing slaves prevailed over all the world, as appears not only from many places of Homer, but of the holy Scriptures, in which mention is made of slaves bought with money. The Taphians lived in a small island adjacent to Ithaca : Mentès was king of it, as appears from the first of the *Odyssey* : they were generally pirates, and are supposed to have had their name from their way of living, which in the Phœnician tongue (as Bochart observes) signifies rapine : *Hataph*, and by contraction *Taph*, bearing that signification.

Frequent use has been made of the Phœnician interpretations through the course of these notes, and perhaps it may be judged necessary to say something why they may be supposed to give names to countries and persons more than any other nation.

They are reported to be the inventors of letters, *Lucan*, lib. iii.

“ Phœnices primi, famæ si creditur, ausi
 “ Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.”

His task it was the wheaten loaves to lay,
 And from the banquet take the bowls away.
 And now the rage of hunger was repress'd,
 And each betakes him to his couch to rest. 509

and were the greatest navigators in the world. Dionysius says they were the first,

Οἱ πρῶτοι νήεσσιν ἐπειρήσαντο θαλάσσης,
 Πρῶτοι δ' ἐμπορείης ἀλιθίνεσσι ἐμνήσαντο.

The first who used navigation, the first who trafficked by the ocean. If we put these two 'qualities together, it is no wonder that a great number of places were called by Phœnician names: for they being the first navigators, must necessarily discover a multitude of islands, countries, and cities, to which they would be obliged to give names when they described them. And nothing is so probable as that they gave those names according to the observations they made upon the nature of the several countries, or employment of the inhabitants. In the present instance, the Taphians being remarkable pirates, as appears from Homer,

— — Τάφιοι ληΐσORES ἄνδρες
 — — ληΐσῆσιν ἐπισπόμενοι Ταφιοῖσι.)

The Phœnicians, who first discovered this island, called it *Taph*, the Island of Pirates. Places receive appellations according to the language of the discoverer, and generally from observations made upon the people. It will add a weight to this supposition, if we remember that Homer was well acquainted with the traditions and customs of the Phœnicians; for he speaks frequently of that people through the course of the *Odyssey*.

Now came the night, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things; the winds began to roar;

v. 510. *Now came the night, — —*

— — the winds began to roar; &c.]

Eustathius observes, that Homer introduces the following story by a very artful connexion, and makes it, as it were, grow out of the subject: the coldness of the present season brings to his mind a time like it, when he lay before Troy.

It is remarkable, that almost all poets have taken an opportunity to give long descriptions of the night; Virgil, Statius, Apollonius, Tasso, and Dryden, have enlarged upon this subject: Homer seems industriously to have avoided it: perhaps he judged such descriptions to be no more than excrescencies, and at best but beautiful superfluities. A modern hyper-critick thinks Mr. Dryden to have excelled all the poets in this point.

All things are hush'd as nature's self lay dead,
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head, &c.

The last verse is translated from Statius,

“ *Et simulant fessos curvata cacumina somnos.*”

which I mention only to propose it to consideration, whether *cacumina* must, in this place, of necessity signify the tops of mountains; why may it not be applied, as it is frequently, to the tops of the trees? I question whether the nodding of a mountain, or the appearance of its nodding, be a natural image: whereas if we understand it of the trees, the difficulty vanishes; and the meaning will be much more easy, that the very trees seem to nod, as in sleep.

I beg the reader's patience to mention another verse of Statius, that has been undoubtedly mistaken.

The driving storm the wat'ry west-wind pours,
 And Jove descends in deluges of show'rs.
 Studious of rest and warmth, Ulysses lies,
 Foreseeing from the first the storm would rise ;
 In mere necessity of coat and cloak, 516
 With artful preface to his host he spoke.

Hear me, my friends ! who this good banquet
 grace ;
 'Tis sweet to play the fool in time and place,

“ Qualis ubi audito venantum murmure Tigris,
 “ Horruit in maculas.” — —

Which Cowley renders,

— — he swells with angry pride,
 And calls forth all his spots on ev'ry side.

In which sense also the author of the Spectator quotes it from Cowley. But it is impossible to imagine that the hair of any creature can change into spots; and if any creature could change it by anger, would not the spots remain when the passion was over? The assertion is absolutely against nature, and matter of fact; and as absurd as to affirm that the hair of a tiger blushes. This mistake arises from the double sense of the word *maculæ*, which signifies also the *meshes* of a net, as any common dictionary will inform us. So Tully, *Reticulum minutis maculis*; Columella, *Rete grandi macula*; Ovid, *Distinctum maculis rete*. This way the sense is obvious: no wonder that a tiger, when inclosed in the toils, should *horrere in maculis*, or erect his hair when he flies against the meshes, endeavouring to escape; and it agrees with the nature of that animal, to roughen his hair when he is angry. I beg the reader's pardon for all this; but the mention of a hypercritick was infecting, and led me into it unawares.

And wine can of their wits the wife beguile, 520
 Make the fage frolick, and the ferious smile,
 The grave in merry measures frisk about,
 And many a long-repentèd word bring out.

Since to be talkative I now commence,
 Let wit cast off the fullen yoke of sense. 525

Once I was strong (wou'd Heav'n restore those days)
 And with my betters claim'd a share of praise.

Ulysses, Menelaus led forth a band,
 And join'd me with them, ('twas their own com-
 mand ;)

A deathful ambush for the foe to lay, 530

Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way :

There, clad in arms, along the marshes spread,

We made the osier-fringed bank our bed.

Full soon th' inclemency of Heav'n I feel,

Nor had these shoulders cov'ring, but of steel.

Sharp blew the north ; snow whitening all the
 fields 536

Froze with the blast, and gath'ring glaz'd our shields.

There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and vest,

Lay cover'd by their ample shields at rest.

Fool that I was ! I left behind my own ; 540

The skill of weather and of winds unknown,

And trusted to my coat and shield alone !

v. 540. *I left behind my cloak, &c.*] To understand this passage, we must remember, that in those eastern regions, after very hot days an extream cold night would sometimes succeed, even with frost and snow, contrary to the

When now was wasted more than half the night,
 And the stars faded at approaching light ;
 Sudden I jogg'd Ulysses, who was laid 545
 Fast by my side, and shiv'ring thus I said :

Here longer in this field I cannot lie,
 The winter pinches, and with cold I die,
 And die aham'd (oh wisest of mankind)
 The only fool who left his cloak behind. 550

He thought, and answer'd : hardly waking yet,
 Sprung in his mind the momentary wit ;
 (That wit, which or in council, or in fight,
 Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right) 554
 Hush thee, he cry'd, (soft-whisp'ring in my ear)
 Speak not a word, lest any Greek may hear—
 And then (supporting on his arm his head)
 Hear me, companions ! (thus aloud he said)

usual order of the season. If it had been winter, no doubt Ulysses would have armed himself against the nocturnal cold, and not have been reduced to such an extremity.

There is one incident in this story that seems extraordinary : Ulysses and Menelaus are said to form an ambush under the very walls of Troy, and yet are described to be sleeping while they thus form it. The words are *εὔδον εἰρηλοί*. *εὔδον* does not necessarily signify to be asleep, as is already proved from the conclusion of the first Iliad : but here it must have that import ; for Ulysses tells his companions, that he has had an extraordinary dream. Besides, even a tendency towards sleep should be avoided by soldiers in an ambuscade, especially by the leaders of it. The only answer that occurs to me is, that perhaps they had centinels waking while they slept ; but even this would be unfoldier-like in our age.

Methinks too distant from the fleet we lie : 560 }
 Ev'n now a vision stood before my eye, }
 And sure the warning vision was from high : }
 Let from among us some swift courier rise,
 Haste to the gen'ral and demand supplies.

Upstart'd Thoas straight, Andræmon's son, 565
 Nimbly he rose, and cast his garment down ;
 Instant, the racer vanish'd off the ground ;
 That instant, in his cloak I wrapt me round :
 And safe I slept, till brightly-dawning shone
 The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne 570

Oh were my strength as then, as then my age!
 Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.
 Yet tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then
 The honours and the offices of men :
 Some master, or some servant would allow 575
 A cloak and vest—but I am nothing now !

Well hast thou spoke (rejoin'd th' attentive swain)
 Thy lips let fall no idle word or vain !
 Nor garment shalt thou want, nor ought beside,
 Meet, for the wand'ring suppliant to provide. 580
 But in the morning take thy cloaths again,
 For here one vest suffices ev'ry swain ;

v. 581. *But in the morning take thy cloaths again.*] This is not spoken in vain; it was necessary for Ulysses to appear in the form of a beggar, to prevent discovery.

The word in the Greek is *δνοπαλίξεις*, which it is impossible to translate without a circumlocution. It paints (observes Eustathius) exactly the dress of a beggar, and the difficulty he labours under in drawing his rags to cover one part of his body that is naked, and while he covers

No change of garments to our hinds is known :
 But when return'd, the good Ulysses' son

that, leaving the other part bare : *δυοπαλίξεις* is *ταῖς παλάμαις δονήσεις* or *δινήσεις*, and expresses how a beggar is embarrassed in the act of covering his body, by reason of the rents in his cloaths.

v. 582. *For here one vest suffices ev'ry swain.*] It is not at first view evident why Ulysses requests a change of raiment from Eumæus, for a better dress would only have exposed him to the danger of a discovery. Besides, this would have been a direct opposition to the injunctions of the Goddess of Wisdom, who had not only disguised him in the habit of a beggar, but changed his features to a conformity with it. Why then should he make this petition? The answer is, to carry on his disguise the better before Eumæus ; he has already told him that he was once a person of dignity, though now reduced to poverty by calamities : and consequently a person who had once known better fortunes, would be uneasy under such mean circumstances, and desire to appear like himself ; therefore he asks a better dress, that Eumæus may believe his former story.

What Eumæus speaks of not having any changes of garments, is not a sign of poverty, but of the simplicity of the manners of those ages. It is the character of the luxurious vain Phæacians, to delight in changes of dress, and agrees not with this plain, sincere, industrious Ithacan, Eumæus.

I wonder this last part of the relation of Ulysses has escaped the censure of the criticks : the circumstance of getting the cloak of Thoas in the cold night, though it shews the artifice of Ulysses essential to his character, yet perhaps may be thought unworthy the majesty of epick poetry, where every thing ought to be great and magnificent. It is of such a nature as to raise a smile, rather

With better hand shall grace with fit attires 585
His guest, and send thee where thy soul desires.

The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,
And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed :
The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide
He spreads ; and adds a mantle thick and wide ;
With store to heap above him, and below, 591
And guard each quarter as the tempests blow.
There lay the king, and all the rest supine ;
All, but the careful master of the swine :
Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care : 595
Well arm'd, and fenc'd against nocturnal air ;

than admiration ; and Virgil has utterly rejected such levities. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulysses adapts himself to Eumæus, and endeavours to engage his favour by that piece of pleasantry ; yet this does not solve the objection, for Eumæus is not a person of a low character : no one in the *Odyssey* speaks with better sense, or better morality. One would almost imagine that Homer was sensible of the weakness of this story, he introduces it so artfully. He tells us in a short preface, that wine unbends the most serious and wise person, and makes him laugh, dance, and speak, without his usual caution : and then he proceeds to the fable of his ambush before Troy. But no introduction can reconcile it to those who think such comick relations should not at all be introduced into epick poetry.

v. 595. *Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care.*] A French critick has been very severe upon this conduct of Eumæus. *The divine hogherd*, says he, *having given the divine Ulysses his supper, sends him to sleep with his hogs, that had white teeth.* When criticks find fault, they ought to

His weighty falchion o'er his shoulder ty'd :
 His shaggy cloak a mountain goat supply'd :
 With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,
 He seeks his lodging in the rocky den. 600
 There to the tusky herd he bends his way,
 Where screen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they
 lay.

take care that they impute nothing to an author but what the author really speaks, otherwise it is not criticism, but calumny and ignorance. Monsieur Perrault is here guilty of both, for Ulysses sleeps in the house of Eumæus, and Eumæus retires to take care of his charge, not to sleep, but to watch with them.

This and the preceding book take up no more than the space of one day. Ulysses lands in the morning, which is spent in consultation with Minerva how to bring about his restoration. About noon he comes to Eumæus, for immediately after his arrival they dine : they pass the afternoon and evening in conference : so that thirty-five days are exactly completed since the beginning of the *Odyssey*.

THE

FIFTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE
A R G U M E N T.

The Return of Telemachus.

THE Goddess Minerva commands Telemachus in a vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the soothsayer. The scene then changes to the cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time Telemachus arrives on the coast, and sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumæus.

T H E

* F I F T E E N T H B O O K

O F T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

Now had Minerva reach'd those ample plains,
Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaüs reigns ;
Anxious she flies to great Ulyffes' heir,
His instant voyage challeng'd all her care.

* Neither this book, nor indeed some of the following, are to be reckoned among the most shining parts of the *Odyssey*. They are narrative, and generally low ; yet natural, and just enough, considering Homer was resolved to describe and follow low life so very minutely. This great poet here resembles an evening sun ; he has not the same heat or brightness ; there are several little clouds about him, though in some places gilded and adorned : however, to make us amends, he breaks out again before the conclusion of his course, and sets at last in glory.

There is no doubt, but all the parts of a poem are not capable of equal lustre ; nay, they ought not to dazzle us alike, or tire us by a perpetual strain upon the imagination. But in these cooler relations a translator has a hard task : he is expected to *shine*, where the author is *not bright* : and the unreasonable critick demands a copy more noble than the original. It is true, these are the passages of which he ought to take particular care, and to set them

Beneath the royal portico display'd, 5
 With Nestor's son, Telemachus was lay'd;

off to the best advantage: but however he may polish a vulgar stone, it will still retain its inherent degree of cloudiness; and the man is ignorant indeed, who thinks one can make it a diamond.

The story now turns to Telemachus, and the poet briefly describes his voyage to his country: there is a necessity to be concise, for the hero of an epick poem is never to be out of sight, after his introduction. The little time that Homer employs in the return of Telemachus is not spent unusefully by Ulysses; during this interval, he learns the state of his publick and domestick affairs from Eumæus, and prepares the way for the destruction of the suitors, the chief design of the whole *Odyssæy*. There is another reason why the poet ought not to dwell at large upon the story of Telemachus; he bears but an incidental relation to the *Odyssæy*, and consequently Homer was necessitated to pass over his actions with brevity, that he might describe the hero of his poem at full length. It has been objected, that no mention has been made of any action at all of Telemachus during his whole stay with Menelaus, and that he lies there idly, without making his voyage contribute any thing to the restitution of Ulysses; but from the former observation it is evident, that this silence in the poet proceeds from judgment; nothing is to be inserted in an epick poem but what has some affinity with the main design of it: but what affinity could the actions of Telemachus in the Spartan court have with those of Ulysses? This would have been to make two heroes in one poem, and would have broken the unity of the action; whereas by the contrary conduct Homer unites the two stories, and makes the voyage of Telemachus subservient to the chief action; namely, the restitution of Ulysses. Telemachus undertakes a voyage to make enquiry after Ulysses; this the poet fully describes, because

In sleep profound the son of Nestor lies ;
Not thine, Ulysses ! Care unseal'd his eyes :

it has an immediate relation to Ulysses ; but passes over all other adventures during the absence of Telemachus, because they have no relation to the design.

I know it has been objected, that the whole story of Telemachus is foreign to the Odyssey, and that the four first books have not a sufficient connexion with the rest of the poem, and therefore that there is a double action : but this objection will cease, if it be made appear, that this voyage contributes to the restoration of Ulysses ; for whatever incident has such an effect, is united to the subject and essential to it. Now that this voyage has such an effect is very evident ; the suitors were ready to seize the throne of Ulysses, and compel his wife to marry ; but by this voyage Telemachus breaks their whole design. Instead of usurping the throne, they are obliging to defend themselves : they defer their purpose, and waste much time in endeavouring to intercept him in his return. By this method leisure is gained from the violence and addresses of the suitors, till Ulysses returns and brings about his own re-establishment. This voyage therefore is the secret source from which all the happiness of Ulysses flows : for had not Telemachus sailed to Pyle, Penelope must have been compelled to marry, and the throne of Ulysses usurped. I have been more large upon this objection, because many foreign criticks lay great weight upon it. See note on v. 110 of the first book.

There has lately been a great dispute amongst the French, concerning the length of the stay of Telemachus from his country. The debate is not very material, nor is it very difficult to settle that point. Telemachus sailed from Ithaca in the evening of the second day, and returns to it on the thirty-eighth in the morning, so that he is absent thirty-five days compleatly.

Restless he griev'd, with various fears oppress'd,
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast. 10

v. 1. *Now had Minerva, &c.*] If this had been related by an historian, he would have only said that Telemachus judg'd it necessary for his affairs to sail back to his own country; but a poet steps out of the common beaten road, ascribes the wisdom of that hero to the Goddess of it, and introduces her in person, to give a dignity to his poetry.

The reader may consult in general the extracts from Bossu, (placed before the *Odyssey*) concerning machines or the interposition of Deities in epick poetry. I will here beg leave to set them in a different and more particular light.

It has been imagined that a Deity is never to be introduced but when all human means are ineffectual: if this were true, Minerva would be in vain employed in bringing Telemachus back, when a common messenger might have answered that purpose as well as the Goddess. I doubt not but the verse of Horace has led many into this error:

“Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus.”

This rule is to be applied only to the Theatre, of which Horace there speaks, and means no more, than when the knot of the play is to be united, and no other way is left for making the discovery, then let a God descend and clear the intricacy to the auditors. But, as Mr. Dryden observes, it has no relation to epick poetry.

It is true, that a Deity is never to be introduced upon little and unworthy occasions; the very design of machines is to add weight and dignity to the story, and consequently an unworthy employment defeats the very intent of them, and debases the Deities by making them act in offices unworthy of the characters of divine personages: but then it is as true, that a poet is at liberty to use them for ornament as well as necessity. For instance, both Virgil

When, O Telemachus! (the Goddess said)
 Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd.
 Thus leaving careless thy paternal right
 The robbers prize, the prey to lawless might.
 On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam, 15
 Ev'n now, the hand of rapine sacks the dome.

and Homer in their descriptions of storms introduce Deities, Neptune and Æolus, only to fill our minds with grandeur and terror; for in reality a storm might have happened without a miracle, and Æneas and Ulysses both have been driven upon unknown shores, by a common storm as well as by the immediate interposition of Neptune or Æolus. But machines have a very happy effect; the poet seems to converse with Gods, gives signs of a divine transport, and distinguishes his poem in all parts from an history.

v. 5. *Beneath the royal portico, &c.*] Minerva here finds Telemachus in bed: it is necessary to remember that Ulysses landed in Ithaca in the morning of the thirty-fifth day; and when Minerva left him, she went to the Spartan court to Telemachus; this vision therefore appears to that hero in the night following the thirty-fifth day. On the thirty-sixth he departs from Menelaus, and lodges that night with Diocles; on the thirty-seventh he embarks towards the evening, sails all night, and lands on the thirty-eighth in the morning in his own country. From this observation it is likewise evident, that Ulysses passes two days in discourse with Eumæus, though the poet only distinguishes the time by the voyage of Telemachus; for the preceding book concludes with the thirty-fifth day, and Telemachus spends the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh and the following night in his return, and meets Ulysses in the morning of the thirty-eighth day. This remark is necessary to avoid confusion, and to make the two stories

Hence to Atrides ; and his leave implore
 To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore ;
 Fly, whilst thy mother virtuous yet withstands
 Her kindred's wishes, and her fire's commands ; 20
 Thro' both, Eurymachus pursues the dame,
 And with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.

of Ulysses and Telemachus coincide, in this and the next book of the *Odyssey*.

v. 20. *Her kindred's wishes, and her fire's commands.*] Ovid had these lines in his view in his *Epistle of Penelope to Ulysses*.

“ Me pater Icarus viduo decedere lecto

“ Cogit, & immensas increpat usque moras.”

But why should Minerva make use of these arguments, to persuade Telemachus to return immediately ; and give him no information concerning the safety of Ulysses, who was now actually landed in his own country ? The poet reserves this discovery to be made in the future part of the story : if Telemachus had known of his father's being already returned, there could have been no room for the beautiful interview between the father and the son ; for the doubts and fears, the surprise and filial tenderness, on the part of Telemachus ; and for the paternal fondness, the yearnings of nature, and the transports of joy, on the part of Ulysses. Aristotle particularly commends this conduct of Homer with respect to Ulysses. These disguises and concealments (says that author) perplex the fable with agreeable plots and intricacies, surprise us with a variety of incidents, and give room for the relation of many adventures ; while Ulysses still appears in assumed characters, and upon every occasion recites a new history. At the same time the poet excellently sustains his character, which is every where distinguished by a wise and ready dissimulation.

Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain
 Thou know'st the practice of the female train,
 Lost in the children of the present spouse 25
 They flight the pledges of their former vows ;
 Their love is always with the lover past ;
 Still the succeeding flame expells the last.
 Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,
 'Till heav'n decrees to bless thee in a bride. 30
 But now thy more attentive ears incline,
 Observe the warrings of a Pow'r divine :
 For thee their snares the suitor lords shall lay
 In Samos sands, or straits of Ithaca,

v. 24. *Thou know'st the practice of the female train.*] This is not spoken in derogation of Penelope, nor applied to her in particular ; it is laid down as an universal maxim, and uttered by the Goddesses of Wisdom : but (says Madam Dacier) I wish the poet had told us, if the husbands in his days had better memories toward their departed wives. But what advantage would this be to the fair sex, if we allow that an husband may possibly forget a former wife ? I chuse rather to congratulate the modern ladies, against whom there is not the least objection of this nature. Is it not evident, that all our widows are utterly disconsolate, appear many months in deep mourning ? and whenever they are prevailed upon to a second marriage, do they not chuse out the strongest, best built, and most vigorous youth of the nation ? For what other reason but that such constitutions may be a security against their ever feeling the like calamity again ? What I have here said shews that the world is well changed since the times of Homer ; and however the race of man is dwindled and decayed since those ages, yet it is a demonstration that the modern ladies are not to blame for it.

To seize thy life shall lurk the murd'rous band, 35
 E'er yet thy footsteps press thy native land.
 No ——— sooner far their riot and their lust
 All cov'ring earth shall bury deep in dust!
 Then distant from the scatter'd islands steer,
 Nor let the night retard thy full career; 40
 Thy heav'nly guardian shall instruct the gales
 To smooth thy passage, and supply thy sails:
 And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,
 Send to the town thy vessel with the friends;
 But seek thou first the master of the swine, 45
 (For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline)
 There pass the night: while he his course pursues
 To bring Penelope the wish'd-for news,
 That thou safe sailing from the Pylian strand
 Art come to bless her in thy native land. 50

Thus spoke the Goddess, and resum'd her flight
 To the pure regions of eternal light.
 Meanwhile Pisistratus he gently shakes,
 And with these words the slumb'ring youth awakes.

Rise, son of Nestor! for the road prepare, 55
 And join the harness'd courfers to the car.

What cause, he cry'd, can justify our flight,
 To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?
 Here wait we rather, 'till approaching day
 Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready
 way. 60

Nor think of flight before the Spartan king
 Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;

Gifts, which to distant ages safely stor'd,
The sacred act of friendship shall record.

Thus he. But when the dawn bestreak'd the
East, 65

The king from Helen rose, and fought his guest.
As soon as his approach the hero knew,
The splendid mantle round him first he threw,
Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,
Respectful met the monarch, and bespoke. 70

Hail, great Atrides, favour'd of high Jove!
Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.
Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,
Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.

If with desire so strong thy bosom glows, 75
Ill, said the king, shou'd I thy wish oppose;
For oft' in others freely I reprove
The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;
Who love too much, hate in the like extream,
And both the golden mean alike condemn. 80

Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,
Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend;
True friendship's laws are by this rule exprest,
Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

v. 84. *Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.*] Homer has here laid together admirable precepts for social life; the passage was much admired; Herodotus borrowed it, as we are informed by Eustathius.

——— ——— ——— τραπέζην
Μειλίξαντ' ἀπίπεμψαι ἐπὰν ἐθέλωσι γέσθαι.

Yet stay, my friends, and in your chariot take 85
 The noblest presents that our love can make :
 Meantime commit we to our women's care
 Some choice domestick viands to prepare ;
 The trav'ler rising from the banquet gay,
 Eludes the labours of the tedious way. 90
 Then if a wider course shall rather please
 Thro' spacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,
 Atrides in his chariot shall attend ;
 Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.
 No prince will let Ulysses' heir remove 95
 Without some pledge, some monument of love :
 These will the caldron, these the tripod give,
 From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive, }
 Or bowl emboss'd whose golden figures live.

To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, re-
 ply'd, 100

O monarch, care of Heav'n ! thy people's pride !
 No friend in Ithaca my place supplies,
 No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes :
 My stores expos'd and fenceless house demand
 The speediest succour from my guardian hand ; 105
 Left in a search too anxious and too vain
 Of one lost joy, I lose what yet remain.

But perhaps Eustathius quoted by memory, or through
 inadvertency wrote down Herodotus for Theocritus, in
 whom these lines are to be found :

Μηδὲ ξεινοδόκον κακὴν ἔιμεναι, ἀλλὰ τραπέζῃ
 μειλίζαντ' ἀπόπρμψαι, ἵππῶν ἐθέλοντι νεεσθαι.

His purpose when the gen'rous warrior heard,
 He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.
 Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home, 110
 Was Boethoedes Eteonus come;
 Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,
 And o'er the coals the smoking fragments lays.

v. 109. *He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.*] It is in the original, *He commanded Helen and her maids to do it.* The moderns have blained Menelaus for want of delicacy in commanding his queen to perform such household offices. I read such passages with pleasure, because they are exact pictures of antient life: we may as well condemn the first inhabitants of the world for want of politeness, in living in tents and bowers, and not in palaces. This command of Menelaus agrees with those manners, and with the patriarchal life. Gen. xviii. 6. *Abraham hastened into his tent, and said unto Sarah his wife, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal: knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.*

I doubt not but the continual descriptions of entertainments have likewise given offence to many; but we may be in some degree reconciled to them, if we consider they are not only instances of the hospitality of the antients, but of their piety and religion: every meal was a religious act, a sacrifice, or a feast of thanksgiving: libations of wine, and offerings of part of the flesh, were constantly made at every entertainment. This gives a dignity to the description, and when we read it, we are not to consider it as an act merely of eating or drinking, but as an office of worship to the Gods.

This is a note of the criticks; but perhaps the same thing might as well be said of our modern entertainments, wherever the good practice of saying *grace* before and after meat is not yet laid aside.

Meantime the king, his son, and Helen, went
 Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent. 115
 The king selected from the glitt'ring rows
 A bowl; the prince a silver beaker chose.
 Theauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes
 Her various textures of unnumber'd dyes,
 And chose the largest; with no vulgar art 120
 Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part:
 Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,
 Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.
 Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,
 And thus the king Ulysses' heir address'd. 125

Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring Jove
 With happiest omens thy desires approve!

v. 123. *Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.*] If this passage were translated literally, it would stand thus, *Helen chose a vesture of most beautiful embroidery, and of the largest extent, a vesture that lay beneath the rest.* We are to understand by the last circumstance, that this vesture was the choicest of her wardrobe, it being repositied with the greatest care, or *τείαίῃ ἀλλων*. The verses are taken from lib. vi. of the Iliad. This robe was the work of Helen's own hands: an instance that in those days a great lady, or a great beauty, might be a good workwoman: and she here seems to take particular care to obviate an opinion one might otherwise have, that she did not apply herself to those works till her best days were past. We are told in the Iliad,

Her in the palace, at her loom she found,
 The golden web her own sad story crown'd:
 The Trojan wars she weav'd, herself the prize,
 And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.

This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;
To me this present, of Vulcanian frame, 130
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;
To thee we now consign the precious load,
The pride of kings, and labour of a God.

Then gave the cup; while Megapenthe brought
The silver vase with living sculpture wrought. 135
The beautiful queen advancing next, display'd
The shining veil, and thus endearing said.

Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,
Long since, in better days, by Helen wove:
Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay, 140
To deck thy bride and grace thy nuptial day.
Meantime may'st thou with happiest speed regain
Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.

She said, and gave the veil; with grateful look
The prince the variegated present took. 145

And now, when thro' the royal dome they pass'd,
High on a throne the king each stranger plac'd.
A golden ew'r th' attendant damsel brings,
Replete with water from the crystal springs;
With copious streams the shining vase supplies 150
A silver laver of capacious size.

They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taste
Of choicest sort and flavour; rich repast! 155

Whilst Eteoneus portions out the shares,
 Atrides' son the purple draught prepares.
 And now (each fated with the genial feast,
 And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceast)
 Ulysses' son, with his illustrious friend, 160
 The horses join, the polish'd car ascend.
 Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,
 And the wide portal echoes to the sound.
 The king precedes; a bowl with fragrant wine
 (Libation destin'd to the Pow'rs divine) 165
 His right-hand held: before the steeds he stands,
 Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these com-
 mands.

Farewell and prosper, youths! let Nestor know
 What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,
 For all the proofs of his paternal care, 170
 Thro' the long dangers of the ten years war.
 Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)
 Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.
 And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet!
 To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat: 175

v. 174. *And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet! &c.*] It is not impossible but a false reading may have crept into the text in this verse. In the present edition it stands thus.

— — — αἴ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὣς
 Νοσῆου, Ἰθάκην δὲ κίων Ὀδυσσεὶ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
 Ἐποίημι. ———

The sense will be less intricate, and the construction more easy, if instead of *κίων* we insert *κίχων*, and read the line thus pointed.

How will each speech his grateful wonder raise?
 How will each gift indulge us in thy praise?

Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right
 Advanc'd the bird of Jove: auspicious sight!
 A milk-white fowl his clinching talons bore, 180
 With care domestick pamper'd at the floor.
 Peasants in vain with threat'ning cries pursue,
 In solemn speed the bird majestick flew
 Full dexter to the car: the prosp'rous fight
 Fill'd evry breast with wonder and delight. 185

But Nestor's son the chearful silence broke,
 And in these words the Spartan chief bespoke.
 Say if to us the Gods these omens send,
 Or fates peculiar to thyself portend?

Whilst yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts oppress'd, 190
 The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breast.

Hear me, she cry'd, to whom the Gods have giv'n
 To read this sign, and mystick sense of Heav'n.

Νοστήσας Ἰθακὴν δὲ, κίχων Ὀδυσσεῖ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
 εἶποιμ'.

Then the verse will have this import, "O may I, upon
 " my return to Ithaca, finding Ulysses in his palace, give
 " him an account of their friendship!" whereas in the
 common editions there is a tautology, and either κίχων or
 νοστήσας must be allowed to be a superfluity.

v. 192. *Hear me, she cry'd, &c.*] It is not clear why
 the poet ascribes a greater quickness and penetration to
 Helen in the solution of this prodigy, than to Menelaus.

As thus the plummy sov'reign of the air
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care, 195

Is it, as Eustathius asserts, from a superiour acuteness of nature and presence of mind in the fair sex? Or is it, that Helen in this resembles some modern beauties, who (though their husbands be asked the question) will make the answer themselves! I would willingly believe that Helen might happen to stand in such a position, as to be able to make more minute observation upon the flight of the eagle, than Menelaus; and being more circumstantial in the observation, she might for that reason be more ready and circumstantial in the interpretation. But Homer himself tells us, that she received it from the Gods. This is a pious lesson, to teach us in general, that all knowledge is the gift of God, and perhaps here particularly inserted to raise the character of Helen, and make us less surpris'd to see her forgiven by Menelaus, when she is not only pardoned, but favoured thus with inspiration. And indeed it was necessary to reconcile us to this fatal beauty; at whom the reader is naturally enough offended: she is an actress in many of the scenes of the *Odyssey*, and consequently to be redeemed from contempt: this is done by degrees; the poet steals away the adulteress from our view, to set before us the amiable penitent.

v. 194. *As thus the plummy sov'reign, &c.*] Ulysses is the eagle, the bird represents the suitors: the cries of the men and women when the eagle seized his prey, denote the lamentations of the relations of the suitors, who are slain by Ulysses. The circumstance of the flight of the eagle, close to the horses, is added to shew that the prodigy had a fixed and certain reference to a person present; namely Telemachus: the eagle comes suddenly from a mountain: this means that Ulysses shall unexpectedly arrive from the country to the suitors destruction. The fowl is said to be fed by the family, this is a full designation of

And wander'd thro' the wide æthereal way
 To pour his wrath on yon' luxurious prey ;
 So shall thy god-like father, tofs'd in vain
 Thro' all the dangers of the boundless main,
 Arrive, (or is perchance already come) 200
 From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.

Oh ! if this promis'd bliss by thund'ring Jove,
 (The prince reply'd) stand fix'd in fate above ;
 To thee, as to some God, I'll temples raise,
 And crown thy altars with the costly blaze. 205

He said ; and bending o'er his chariot, flung
 Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong ;
 The bounding shafts upon the harness play,
 'Till night descending intercepts the way.
 To Diocleus, at Pheræ, they repair, 210
 Whose boasted fire was sacred Alpheus' heir ;
 With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,
 Nor found the hospitable rites unpay'd.
 But soon as morning from her orient bed
 Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red, 215
 They join'd the steeds, and on the chariot sprung ;
 The brazen portals in their passage rung.

To Pylos soon they came ; when thus begun
 To Nestor's heir Ulysses' god-like son :

the suitors, who feed upon Ulysses, and prey upon his family. And as this bird is killed by the talons of the eagle, so the suitors fall by the spear of Ulysses. *Eustathius.*

Let not Pisistratus in vain be prest, 220
 Nor unconsenting hear his friend's request ;
 His friend by long hereditary claim,
 In toils his equal, and in years the same.
 No farther from our vessel, I implore,
 The coursers drive ; but lash them to the shore. 225
 Too long thy father would his friend detain ;
 I dread his proffer'd kindness urg'd in vain.

v. 226. *Too long thy father would his friend detain.*] This has been objected against, as contrary to the promise of Telemachus, who assured Menelaus that he would *acquaint Nestor with his great friendship and hospitality* : is he therefore not guilty of falsehood, by embarking immediately without fulfilling his promise? Eustathius answers, that the prodigy of the eagle occasions this alteration, and that the not fulfilling his promise is to be ascribed to accident and necessity. But the words of Telemachus sufficiently justify his veracity ; they are of the plural number *καταλεξομεν*. *I and Pisistratus will inform Nestor of your hospitality* : this promise he leaves to be performed by Pisistratus, who returns directly to Nestor. Others blame Telemachus as unpolite, in leaving Nestor without any acknowledgement for his civilities. Dacier has recourse to the command of Minerva, and to the prodigy of the eagle, for his vindication : he is commanded by the Gods to return immediately ; and therefore not blameable for complying with their injunctions. But perhaps it is a better reason to say, that the nature of the poem requires such a conduct : the action of the *Odyssy* stands still till the return of Telemachus, (whatever happens to him in *Pyle* being foreign to it) and therefore Homer shews his judgment, in precipitating the actions of Telemachus, rather than trifling away the time, while the story sleeps, only to shew a piece of complaisance and ceremony.

The hero paus'd, and ponder'd this request,
 While love' and duty warr'd within his breast.
 At length resolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand, 230
 And lash'd his panting courfers to the strand.

There, while within the poop with care he stor'd
 The regal presents of the Spartan lord ;
 With speed be gone, (said he) call ev'ry mate,
 E'er yet to Nestor I the tale relate : 235

'Tis true, the fervour of his gen'rous heart
 Brooks no repulse, nor could'st thou soon depart ;
 Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find,
 In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.

But when arriv'd, he thy return shall know, 240
 How will his breast with honest fury glow ?
 This said, the founding strokes his horses fire,
 And soon he reach'd the palace of his fire.

Now, (cry'd Telemachus) with speedy care
 Hoise ev'ry sail, and ev'ry oar prepare. 245
 Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
 And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.

Meantime the prince with sacrifice adores
 Minerva, and her guardian aid implores ;
 When lo ! a wretch ran breathless to the shore, 250
 New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.
 A seer he was, from great Melampus sprung,
 Melampus, who in Pylos flourish'd long,

v. 252. — — *From great Melampus sprung.*] There is some obscurity in this genealogical history. Melampus

'Till urg'd by wrongs a foreign realm he chose,
 Far from the hateful cause of all his woes. 255
 Neleus his treasures one long year detains ;
 As long, he groan'd in Phylacus's chains :
 Meantime, what anguish and what rage, combin'd,
 For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind !
 Yet 'scap'd he death ; and vengeful of his wrong 260
 To Pylos drove the lowing herds along :
 Then (Neleus vanquish'd, and consign'd the Fair
 To Bias' arms) he fought a foreign air ;
 Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,
 There form'd his empire ; there his palace rose. 265

was a prophet, he lived in Pylos, and was a person of great wealth ; his uncle Neleus seized his riches, and detained them a whole year, to oblige him to recover his herds detained by Iphyclus in Phylace ; he failed in the attempt, and was kept in prison by Iphyclus, the son of Phylacus. Bias, the brother of Melampus, was in love with Pero the daughter of Neleus ; Neleus, to engage Melampus more strongly in the enterprize, promises to give Pero in marriage to his brother Bias, upon the recovery of his herds from Iphyclus. At length Iphyclus releases Melampus from prison, upon his discovering to him how he might have an heir to succeed to his dominions, and rewards him with restoring the herds of Neleus : then Neleus retracts his promise, and refuses to give his daughter Pero to Bias the brother of Melampus ; upon this Neleus and Melampus quarrel, and engaging in a single combat, Neleus is vanquished, and Melampus retires to Argos. See lib. xi. v. 350, &c. and the annotations, note 23.

From him Antiphates and Mantius came :
 The first begot Oiclus great in fame,
 And he Amphiaraus, immortal name!
 The people's faviour, and divinely wise,
 Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies, 270
 Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.

v. 270. *Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,
 Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.]*

The poet means Eryphyle, who, being bribed with a golden bracelet by Polynices, persuaded her husband Amphiaraus to go to the Theban war, where he lost his life. This is a remarkable passage: *Though he was loved by Jupiter and Apollo, yet he reached not to old age.* Is a short life the greatest instance of the love of the Gods? Plato quotes the verse to this purpose. "The life of man is so loaded with calamity, that it is an instance of the favour of Heaven to take the burthen from us with speed." The same author in Axiochus (if that dialogue be his) asserts, that the Gods, having a perfect insight into human affairs, take speedily to themselves those whom they love. Thus when Trophonius and Agamemes, had built a temple to Apollo, they prayed to receive a blessing the most beneficial to mankind: the God granted their prayers, and they were both found dead the next morning. Thus likewise the priests of Juno, when her two sons had yoked themselves to her chariot, and drawn her for the greater expedition to the temple, prayed to the Goddess to reward their filial piety; and they both died that night. This agrees with the expression of Menander, He whom the Gods love dies young.

Ὅν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος.

From Mantius Clitus, whom Aurora's love
 Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above:
 And Polyphides on whom Phœbus shone
 With fullest rays, Amphiarus now gone; 275
 In Hyperesia's groves he made abode,
 And taught mankind the counsels of the God.
 From him sprung Theoclymenus, who found
 (The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)

v. 272. — — — — *Aurora's love*

Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above.]

There is nothing more common than such accounts of men being carried away by Goddesses, in all the Greek poets; and yet what offends more against credibility? The poets invented these fables merely out of compliment to the dead. When any person happened to be drowned in a river; if a man, some Water Nymph stole him; if a woman, she was seized to be the wife of the River God. If any were lost at sea, Neptune or some of the Sea Gods or Goddesses had taken them to their beds. But to speak to the present purpose; if any person died in the fields, and his body happened not to be found, if he was murdered and buried, or devoured by wild beasts, so that no account was heard of his death, he was immediately imagined to be taken from the earth by some Deity who was in love with his beauty. Thus Clitus being lost in his morning sports, like Orion while he was hunting, he was fabled to be carried to heaven by Aurora; being lost at the time of the morning over which that Deity presides.

v. 278. *From him sprung Theoclymenus—]* We have had a long genealogical digression to introduce Theoclymenus: I fear the whole passage will prove distasteful to an English palate, it not being capable of any ornaments of

Telemachus: whom, as to Heav'n he prest 280
 His ardent vows, the stranger thus addrest.

O thou! that dost thy happy course prepare
 With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r;
 By that dread Pow'r to whom thy vows are paid;
 By all the lives of these; thy own dear head, 285
 Declare sincerely to no foe's demand
 Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

poetry. I could wish Homer had omitted or shortened such passages, though they might be useful in his age; for by such honourable insertions he made his court to the best families then in Greece. It is true the story is told concisely, and this occasions some obscurity; distance of time as well as place, makes us see all objects somewhat confusedly and indistinctly. In the days of Homer these stories were universally known, and consequently wanted no explication; the obscurity therefore is not to be charged upon Homer, but to time, which has defaced and worn away some parts of the impression, and made the image less discernible.

The use the poet makes of the adventure of Theoclymenus, is to give encouragement to Telemachus: he assists him with his advice, and by his gift of prophecy explains to him a prodigy in the conclusion of this book. By this method he connects it with the main action, in giving Telemachus assurances that his affairs hasten to a re-establishment. Besides these short relations are valuable, as they convey to posterity brief histories of ancient facts and families that are extant no where else.

v. 287. *Declare — thy name, and lineage, &c.*] These questions may be thought somewhat extraordinary; for what apparent reason is there for this fugitive to be told

Prepare then, said Telemachus, to know
 A tale from falshood free, not free from woe.
 From Ithaca, of royal birth, I came, 290
 And great Ulysses (ever honour'd name!)
 Was once my sire: tho' now for ever lost
 In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost!

the name of the parents of Telemachus? But the interrogations are very material; he makes them to learn if Telemachus or his father are friends to the person slain by his hand? if they were, instead of sailing with him, he would have reason to fly from him, as from a person who might take away his life by the laws of the country. Thus in the Hebrew law, Numb. xxxv. 19. *The revenger of blood, (ὁ ἀσχιτέων, or propinquus) shall slay the murderer when he meeteth him.* But the Jews had cities of refuge, to which the murderers fled as to a sanctuary: the Greeks in like manner, if the homicide fled into a voluntary exile, permitted him to be in security till the murder was atoned, either by fulfilling a certain time of banishment, or by a pecuniary mulct or expiation.

I will only further remark the conciseness of these interrogations of Theoclymenus: he asks four questions in a breath, in the compass of one line; his apprehensions of being pursued give him no leisure to expatiate. Homer judiciously adapts his poetry to the circumstances of the murderer, a man in fear being in great haste to be in security. Telemachus answers with equal brevity, being under a necessity to finish his voyage in the night to avoid the ambush of the suitors. For this reason Homer shortens the relation, and complies with the exigency of Telemachus: with this further view, to unite the subordinate story of Telemachus with that of Ulysses, it being necessary to hasten to the chief action, and without delay carry on the main design of the Odyssey in the re-establishment of Ulysses.

Whose fate enquiring thro' the world we rove ;
 The last, the wretched proof of filial love. 295

The stranger then. Nor shall I aught conceal,
 But the dire secret of my fate reveal.

Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I slew ;
 Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue
 With unrelenting rage and force from home 300

The blood-stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.
 But bear, oh bear me o'er yon' azure flood ;
 Receive the suppliant ! spare my destin'd blood !

Stranger (reply'd the prince) securely rest,
 Assur'd in our faith ; henceforth our guest. 305

Thus affable, Ulysses' god-like heir
 Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring spear :
 He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,
 And by his side the guest accepted plac'd. 309

The chief his orders gives : th' obedient band
 With due observance wait the chief's command ;
 With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
 The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.
 Minerva calls ; the ready gales obey
 With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea. 315
 Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,
 When thick'ning darkness clos'd the doubtful day ;

v. 316. *Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis — &c.*] This whole passage has been greatly corrupted; one line is omitted in all our editions of Homer, and the verses themselves are printed erroneously: for thus they stand, lib. viii. p. 539. of Strabo's Geography.

The silver Phæa's glitt'ring rills they lost,
And skim'd along by Elis' sacred coast.

Βᾶν δὲ παρὰ Κρένυς ἢ Χαλκίδα καλλιρέεθρον,
Δύσσετό τ' ἠέλι· σκίοῦντο τε πᾶσαι ἀγυαί,
Ἦ δὲ Φεας ἐπέβαλλεν ἀγαλλομένη διὸς ὤρω.

The first line is added from Strabo : thus in Latin,

“ Præterierunt Crunos, & Chalcida fluentis amœnam.”

He writes ἀγαλλομένη for ἐπειγομένη : and Φεας instead of Φεράς. The course that Telemachus steered is thus explained by the same author : he first sailed northwardly as far as Elis, then he turned towards the east, avoiding the direct course to Ithaca, to escape the ambush of the suitors, who lay between Samos and Ithaca. Then he passed the Echinades (called Θοαί, that is ἰξεῖαι, or *sharp-pointed*, by Homer. See Strabo, lib. x. They are called Oxias by Pliny) lying near the gulf of Corinth, and the mouths of Achelous ; thus leaving Ithaca on the east, and passing it, he alters his course again, sails northwardly between Ithaca and Acarnania, and lands on the coast opposite to the Cephallenian ocean, where the suitors formed their ambush. The places mentioned by Homer lie in this order, Cruni, Chalcis, and Phæa : and are all rivers of small note, or rather brooks, as Strabo expresses it : ἀδόξαν ποταμῶν διόματα, μᾶλλον δὲ ὀχέτων,

It is highly probable that Phæa, and not Pheræ, is the true reading, for Pheræ lay in Messenia, and not in Elis, as Strabo writes, and was in the possession of Agamemnon ; for he mentions that city amongst the seven which he promises Achilles, in the ninth book of the Iliad.

Sev'n ample cities shall confess thy sway,
Thee Enopé, and Pheræ thee obey.

If it had not been under his dominion, how could he transfer the right to Achilles ? Besides, it would be absurd to join Pheræ directly with Chalcis, when the one was in

Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind, 320
 And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

Meantime the king, Eumæus, and the rest,
 Sat in the cottage, at their rural feast :
 The banquet past, and satiate ev'ry man,
 To try his host Ulysses thus began. 325

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your
 guest ;

The last I purpose in your walls to rest :
 To-morrow for myself I must provide,
 And only ask your counsel, and a guide :
 Patient to roam the street, by hunger led, 330
 And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.

There in Ulysses' roof I may relate
 Ulysses' wand'rings to his royal mate ;
 Or mingling with the suitors haughty train
 Not undeserving some support obtain. 335

Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
 Patron of industry and manual arts :

Messenia, the other in Elis; this would make the course of Telemachus's navigation unintelligible, if Elis and Messenia were confounded in the relation, and used promiscuously without order or regularity.

I will only add that Strabo in the xxth book of his Geography, instead of *καλλιθέεθρον*, reads *πειρηνοέσσαν*, perhaps through a slip of his memory.

v. 336. *Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
 Patron of industry and manual arts.]*

Mercury was the servant and minister of the Gods, and

Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,
 The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend ;
 To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame ; 340
 Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.
 Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,
 Whom fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.

Alas ! (Eumæus with a sigh rejoïn'd)
 How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind ?
 If on that god less race thou would'st attend, 346
 Fate owes thee sure a miserable end !

was feigned to be the patron of all persons of the like station upon earth ; it was supposed to be by his favour that all servants and attendants were successful in their several functions. In this view the connexion will be easy, “ I will go (says Ulysses) and offer my service to the suitors, and by the favour of Mercury who gives success to persons of my condition, shall prosper ; for no man is better able to execute the offices of attendance, than myself.” It may be objected, that these functions are unworthy of the character, and beneath the dignity of an hero ; but Ulysses is obliged to act in his assumed, not real character ; as a beggar, not as a king. Athenæus (lib. i. p. 18.) vindicates Ulysses in another manner, “ Men (says he) in former ages performed their own offices, and gloried in their dexterity in such employments. Thus Homer describes Ulysses as the most dextrous man living, in ordering wood for the fire, and in the arts of cookery.” But it is no more derogation to him to put on the appearance of a beggar, than it was to Pallas to assume that of a swain, as she frequently does throughout the Odyssy.

Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,
 And pull descending vengeance from on high.
 Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast; 350
 A blooming train in rich embroid'ry drest,
 With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,
 And smiling round celestial youth attends.

Stay then : no eye askance beholds thee here ;
 Sweet is thy converse to each social ear ; 355
 Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,
 'Till good Telemachus accepts his guest
 With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,
 And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

To him the man of woes. O gracious Jove ! 360
 Reward this stranger's hospitable love,
 Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,
 Cheers the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.
 Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,
 A life of wand'rings is the greatest woe : 365
 On all their weary ways wait care and pain,
 And pine and penury, a meagre train.
 To such a man since harbour you afford,
 Relate the farther fortunes of your lord ;

v. 348. *Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky.*] The sense of this passage appears to me very obvious ; Dacier renders it, *whose violence and insolence is so great that they regard not the Gods, and that they attack even the heavens.* I should rather chuse to understand the words in the more plain and easy construction : Grotius is of this judgment, and thinks they bear the same import as these in Gen. xviii. 21. *I will go down and see if they have done according to the cry which is come unto heaven :* and indeed there is a great similitude between the expressions.

What cares his mother's tender breast engage, 370
 And fire, forsaken on the verge of age ;
 Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,
 Or range the house of darkness and of death ?
 To whom the swain. Attend what you enquire,
 Laertes lives, the miserable fire, 375

v, 370. *What cares his mother's tender breast engage,
 And fire, forsaken on the verge of age.]*

These questions may seem to be needless, because Ulysses had been fully acquainted with the story of Laertes, and the death of his mother Anticlea, by the shade of Tiresias ; but Ulysses personates a stranger, and to carry on that character, pretends to be unacquainted with all the affairs of his own family. I cannot affirm that such frequent repetitions of the same circumstances are beautiful in Homer: the retirement of Laertes has been frequently mentioned, and the death of Anticlea related in other parts of the *Odyssey* ; however necessary such reiterated accounts may be, I much question whether they will prove entertaining ; Homer himself in this place seems to apprehend it ; for Eumæus passes over the questions made by Ulysses with a very short answer, and enlarges upon other circumstances, relating to his family and affairs, to give, as Eustathius observes, variety to his poetry. But this conduct is very judicious upon another account ; it lets Ulysses into the knowledge of his condition, and by it he is able to take his measures with the greater certainty, in order to bring about his own re-establishment. This is a demonstration that the objection of Rapin is without foundation ; he calls these interviews between Ulysses and Eumæus mere idle fables, invented solely for amusement, and contributing nothing to the action of the *Odyssey* ; but the contrary is true, for Ulysses directs his course according to these informations.

Lives, but implores of ev'ry Pow'r to lay
 The burden down, and wishes for the day.
 Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
 Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,
 Sole, and all comfortless, he wastes away 380
 Old age, untimely posting ere his day.
 She too, sad mother! for Ulysses lost
 Pin'd out her bloom, and vanish'd to a ghost.
 (So dire a fate, ye righteous Gods! avert,
 From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart!) 385
 While yet she was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,
 Her pleasing converse minister'd relief:
 With Ctimene, her youngest daughter, bred,
 One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.
 But when the softly-stealing pace of time 390
 Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
 To Samos' isle she sent the wedded fair;
 Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;
 Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,
 Nor less the darling object of her love. 395
 Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercast,
 Yet Providence deserts me not at least;
 My present labours food and drink procure,
 And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.

v. 399. *And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.*] This verse,

Τῶν ἐφαγόντ', ἐπιόντε, καὶ αἰδοίσις τῶ ἔδωκα.

has been traduced into the utmost obscenity; Eustathius vindicates the expression: it means, "I have sustained

Small is the comfort from the queen to hear 400
 Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear ;
 Blank and discountenanc'd the servants stand,
 Nor dare to question where the proud command :
 No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs ;
 Want feeds not there, where luxury devours, 405
 Nor harbours charity where riot reigns :
 Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains.

The suff'ring chief at this began to melt ;
 And, oh Eumæus ! thou (he cries) hast felt
 The spite of fortune too ! her cruel hand 410
 Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land !
 Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,
 To early wants ! a man of miseries !
 Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare :
 Sunk the fair city by the rage of war, 415
 Where once thy parents dwelt ? or did they keep,
 In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep ?

“ myself with meat and drink by an honest industry, and
 “ have got wherewithal to relieve virtue that wants.” He
 interprets αἰδοίοισιν, by ἀνδράσιν αἰδῶς ἀξίοις, or, *men worthy of
 regard and honour* : ξήνοις ἢ ικέταις. The following words,

— — Οὐ μείλιχόν ἐστιν ἀκῆσαι
 Οὔτ' ἔπος, ἢ τέ τι ἔργον —

are capable of a double construction, and imply either that
*I take no delight in hearing of Penelope, she being in distress,
 and in the power of the suitors* ; or that the suitors so besiege
 the palace, that *it is impossible for me to hear one gentle word
 from Penelope, or receive one obliging action from her hand.*
 The preference is submitted to the reader's judgment ;
 they both contain images of tenderness and humanity.

So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
 Rude pirates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main?
 Doom'd a fair prize to grace some prince's board,
 The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.

If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
 A story fruitful of events attend:
 Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,
 And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ,
 Long nights the now declining year bestows,
 A part we consecrate to soft repose,
 A part in pleasing talk we entertain;
 For too much rest itself becomes a pain.

Let those, whom sleep invites, the call obey,
 Their cares resuming with the dawning day:
 Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd
 Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind;
 Review the series of our lives, and taste
 The melancholy joy of evils past:

v. 426. *Long nights the now declining year bestows, &c.]* From hence we may conclude, that the return of Ulysses was probably in the decline of the year, in the latter part of the autumn, and not in the summer; the nights then being short cannot be called *Νύκτες ἀθήσφατοι*. *Eustathius.*

v. 429. ——— *Too much rest itself becomes a pain.]* This aphorism is agreeable to nature and experience; the same thing is asserted by Hippocrates, *Sleep or watchfulness, when excessive, become diseases*; too much sleep occasions an excess of perspiration, and consequently weakens and dissipates the animal spirits. *Dacier.*

v. 434. — — — — — *and taste*
The melancholy joy of evils past.]

For he who much has suffer'd, much will know ;
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.

Above Ortygia lies an isle of fame,
Far hence remote, and Syria is the name ;
(There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
The sun's diurnal, and his annual race) 441

There is undoubtedly a great pleasure in the remembrance of past sufferings : nay calamity has this advantage over prosperity ; an evil when past turns into a comfort ; but a past pleasure though innocent, leaves in its room an anxiety for the want of it, and if it be a guilty pleasure, a remorse. The reason (observes Eustathius) why past evils delight, is from the consciousness of the praise due to our prudence, and patience under them, from the sense of our felicity in being delivered from them, and from gratitude to divine Providence, which has delivered us. It is the joy of good men to believe themselves the favourites of Heaven.

v. 438. *Ortygia.*] This is an ancient name of Delos, so called from ὄρτυξ, a *quail*, from the great numbers of those birds found upon that island. Lycophron, in his obscure way of writing, calls it ὄρτυξ πτερυγμένη or the *winged quail* ; perhaps from the fable of Asteria being turned into that bird in her flight from Jupiter, and giving name to the island from the transformation she suffered upon it. It is one of the Cyclades, and lies in the Ægean ocean. Syria, or Syros, is another small island lying eastward of Ithaca, according to true geography.

v. 440. *There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
The sun's diurnal, and his annual race.]*

The words in Homer are τροπαὶ ἡελίου, or *solis conversiones*. Monsieur Perault insults the poet as ignorant of geography, for placing Syros under the *tropick* ; an error (says

Not large, but fruitful ; stor'd with grafs to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep ;

he) which commentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourse to a sun-dial of Pherecydes on which the motions of the sun (the τροπαὶ ἡελίοιο) were designed. The last defence would indeed be ridiculous, since Pherecydes flourished three hundred years after the time of Homer : no one (replies Monsieur Boileau) was ever at any difficulty about the sense of this passage ; Eustathius proves that *τρέπεσθαι* signifies the same as *δύνειν*, and denotes the setting of the sun ; so that the words mean, that Syros is situate above Ortygia, on that side where the sun sets, or westerly, *πρὸς τὰ δυτικὰ μέρη τῆς Ὀρτυγίας*. It is true, Eustathius mentions a bower, *Σπήλαιον*, in which the conversions of the sun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate Homer : but Bochart and others affirm, that Eustathius is in an error, and that Syros is so far from lying to the west, *πρὸς τροπὰς ἡελίοιο*, that it bears an eastern position both with respect to Ithaca and Delos : how is this objection to be answered ? Bochart, p. 411. of his *Geographia sacra*, explains it by having recourse to the bower mentioned by Eustathius, in which the motions of the sun were drawn. Pherecydes (says Hesychius Milesius) having collected the writings of the Phœnicians, from the use of them alone without any instructor, became famous in the world by the strength of his own genius : and Laertius writes, that an heliotrope made by him was preserved in the island of Syros. Thus it is evident, that he borrowed his knowledge from the Phœnicians, and probably his skill in astronomy, they being very expert in that science, by reason of its use in their navigation. Why then might there not be a machine which exhibited the motions of the sun, made by the Phœnicians, and why might not Homer be acquainted with it ? It is probable that Pherecydes took his pattern from this heliotrope, which being one of the greatest rarities of antiquity, might

Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
And her rich valleys wave with golden corn. 445

give a great reputation to Syros, and consequently was worthy to be celebrated by Homer, the great preserver of antiquities. *Fallitur igitur, (says Bochart) Eustathius, cum vult intelligi, quasi sita sit Syrus ad occidentales partes Deli; cum contra Deli ad ortum sit Syrus, non ad occasum; & rem sic se habere ex ipso Homero patet, apud quem Eumæus in Ithacâ, Syriam asserit esse trans Delum, quo nihil dici potuit falsius, si Syrus sit ad occasum Deli.* If this answer appears to any person too studied and abstruse, the difficulty may be solved, by supposing Eumæus speaking of Delos, as it lay with respect to Syrus, before he was carried from it; for instance, if Syrus lies on the east of Delos to a man in Ithaca, both Ithaca and Delos will lie on the west of Syrus to one of that island; I would therefore imagine that Eumæus speaks as a native of Syrus, and not as a sojourner in Ithaca, and then Delos will lie towards the sun-setting, or πρὸς ἡλίου τροπαῖς: but this last I only propose as a conjecture, not presuming to offer it as a decision.

v. 442. *Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep.]*

It is probable that Homer was well acquainted with the nature of this island, and that it really enjoyed an admirable temperature of air; and therefore was exceedingly healthful; the fertility of the soil proves the happiness of the air, which would naturally free the inhabitants from the maladies arising from a less salubrious situation. It is for this reason that they are said to be slain by Diana and Apollo. All deaths that were sudden, and without sickness, were ascribed to those Deities. Bochart (p. 410.) tells us, that the name of Syros was given to the island by the Phœnicians; Asira, or Sira, signifying *rich*, in their language; or rather it was so called from Sura, or Asura, signifying *happy*; either of these derivations fully denote

No want, no famine the glad natives know,
 Nor sink by sickness to the shades below ;
 But when a length of years unnerves the strong,
 Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.
 They bend the silver bow with tender skill, 450
 And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.
 Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
 Where two fair cities rise with equal pride.
 But both in constant peace one prince obey,
 And Ctesius there, my father, holds the sway. 455
 Freighted, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort
 A ship of Sidon anchor'd in our port ;

the excellence both of the soil and air : and that this name is of Phœnician extract is probable from the words of Homer, who assures us that they stayed a whole year upon this island, and consequently had opportunity to know the healthfulness and fertility of it.

v. 457. *A ship of Sidon* —] Here is a full testimony, that the Phœnicians were remarkable for arts and navigation over all the old world. They were expelled from their country by Joshua, (as Bochart informs us) and then settling along the sea-coasts, they spread over all the Mediterranean, and by degrees sent out colonies into Europe, Asia, and Africk ; that they were in Africk appears from Procopius, where he mentions a pillar, with a Phœnician inscription. Ἡμεῖς ἐσμὲν οἱ φύγοντες ἀπὸ προσώπου Ἰησοῦ τῆ ληστῆ υἱοῦ Νάνη ; that is, *We are a people that fly from Joshua the son of Nun, the robber* ; they gave him that title out of resentment for their dispossession. The character they bear in the Scriptures agrees with this in Homer. Isaiah xxiii. 2. *The merchants of Sidon, that pass over the seas* ; and it likewise appears from the Scriptures, that they excelled in all arts of embroidery, and works of curiosity.

What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
 Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land :
 This nymph, where anchor'd the Phœnician
 train 460

To wash her robes descending to the main,
 A smooth-tongu'd sailer won her to his mind ;
 (For love deceives the best of woman-kind.)
 A sudden trust from sudden liking grew ;
 She told her name, her race, and all she knew.
 I too (she cry'd) from glorious Sidon came, 466
 My father Arybas, of wealthy fame ;

v. 458. *What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
 Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.]*

I was surpris'd to find that Eustathius mistook this Phœnician woman for the mother of Eumæus ; she herself tells us, that she was only his governess.

Παῖδα γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἐστὶ ἐνὶ μεγάροις ἀτιτάλλω.

It is not probable that Eumæus would have painted his own mother in the dress of an adulteress, and an abandoned traitress : nay, he directly distinguishes his mother from this Phœnician in the sequel of the story (where he calls her *πότνια μήτηρ*, or his *venerable mother*) and when he speaks of the Phœnician, he constantly calls her *γυνή*, not *μήτηρ*. Nor indeed could he have called her *πότνια* at all, if she had been a person of such a detestable character. Spondanus adopts the mistake of Eustathius, and endeavours to vindicate her from the *manner* of her frailty. *Modeste decepta donis, &c. ut eorum libidini obsecundaret*, “ it “ was a modest adultery, she being deceived by bribes to “ yield to their sollicitation.” However erroneous this opinion is, yet it shews Spondanus to be a kind and complaisant casuist.

But snatch'd by pirates from my native place,
The Taphians fold me to this man's embrace.

Haste then (the false designing youth reply'd) 470
Haste to thy country ; love shall be thy guide ;
Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast,
For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.

“ Swear first (she cry'd) ye sailors! to restore
“ A wretch in safety to her native shore.” 475 }
Swift as she ask'd, the ready sailors swore.

She then proceeds: Now let our compact made
Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,
Nor near me any of your crew descry'd
By road frequented, or by fountain side. 480

Be silence still our guard. The monarch's spies
(For watchful age is ready to surmise)
Are still at hand ; and this, reveal'd, must be
Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.

Your vessel loaded, and your traffick past, 485
Dispatch a weary messenger with haste :

Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,
And more, the infant-offspring of the king.
Him, child-like wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,
(A noble prize !) and to your ship convey. 490

Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the
road.

A year they traffick, and their vessel load,
Their stores compleat, and ready now to weigh,
A spy was sent their summons to convey :

An artist to my father's palace came, 495
 With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame :
 Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,
 They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.
 He took th' occasion as they stood intent,
 Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went. 500
 She straight pursu'd, and seiz'd my willing arm ;
 I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.
 Three golden goblets in the porch she found,
 (The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd)
 Hid in her fraudulent bosom, these she bore : 505
 Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore.
 Arriving then, where tilting on the tides
 Prepar'd to lanch the freighted vessel rides ;
 Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep
 With level oar along the glassy deep. 510

v. 502. *I followed smiling, innocent of harm.*] There is a little incredibility in this narration ; for if Eumæus was such an infant as he is described to be at the time when he was betrayed by his Phœnician governess, what probability is there that he should be able to retain all these particulars so circumstantially ? He was not of an age capable of making, or remembering so many observations. The answer is, that he afterwards learned them from Laertes, who bought him of the Phœnicians : and no doubt they told him the quality of Eumæus, to enhance the price and make the better bargain. It is also natural to imagine, that Eumæus, when he grew up to manhood, would be inquisitive after his own birth and fortunes, and therefore might probably learn these particulars from Laertes. *Eustathius.*

Six calmy days and six smooth nights we sail,
 And constant Jove supply'd the gentle gale.
 The seventh, the fraudulent wretch, (no cause de-
 fcry'd)
 Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow dy'd. 514
 Down dropt the caitiff-corse, a worthless load,
 Down to the deep; there roll'd, the future food }
 Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood. }
 An helpless infant, I remain'd behind ;
 Thence borne to Ithaca by wave and wind ;
 Sold to Laertes, by divine command, 520
 And now adopted to a foreign land.

v. 511. *Six calmy days, &c.*] It is evident from this pas-
 sage, that it is above six days sail from Ithaca to Syros,
 though carried with favourable winds. *Dacier.*

v. 514. — *Diana's vengeful arrow* —] I would just
 observe the poetical justice of Homer, in the punishment
 of this Phœnician. Misfortune generally pursues wicked-
 ness, and though we escape the vengeance of man, yet
 Heaven frequently overtakes us when we think we are in
 security, and death calls us from our impious acquisitions.

v. 521. *And now adopted to a foreign land.*] Homer has
 here given us an history of the life of Eumæus; the epi-
 sode contains near an hundred lines, and may seem en-
 tirely foreign to the action of the *Odyssey*. I will not affirm
 that it is in every respect to be justified. The main story
 is at a stand; but we are to consider that this relation takes
 up but small part of one leisure evening, and that the
 action cannot proceed till the return of Telemachus. It
 is of use to set off the character of Eumæus, and shew him

To him the king. Reciting thus thy cares,
 My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares :
 But one choice blessing (such is Jove's high will)
 Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill : 525
 Torn from thy country to no hapless end,
 The Gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.
 Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
 (For she needs little) daily bread and wine.
 While I, so many wand'rings past and woes, 530
 Live but on what thy poverty bestows.

So past in pleasing dialogue away
 The night ; then down to short repose they lay ; }
 Till radiant rose the messenger of day.
 While in the port of Ithaca, the band 535
 Of young Telemachus approach'd the land ;

to be a person of quality, worthy to be an agent in an epick poem, where every character ought to be remote from meanness: so the story has a distant relation to the *Odyssey*, and perhaps is not to be looked upon merely as an excrescence from the main building, but a small projection to adorn it.

v. 534. *'Till radiant rose the messenger of day.*] This is the morning of the thirty-eighth day since the beginning of the *Odyssey*. It is observable that Telemachus takes more time in his return from Pylos, than in sailing thither from his own country ; for in the latter end of the second book he sets sail after sun-setting, and reached Pyle in the morning : here he embarks in the afternoon, and yet arrives not at Ithaca till after break of day. The reason of it is not to be ascribed to a less prosperous wind, but to the greater compass he was obliged to fetch, to escape the

Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,
 And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd :
 Then on the breezy shore descending join
 In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine. 540
 When thus the prince : Now each his course
 pursue ;

I to the fields, and to the city you.
 Long absent hence, I dedicate this day
 My swains to visit, and the works survey.
 Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies 545
 Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.

Then Theoclymenus. But who shall lend,
 Meantime, protection to thy stranger-friend ?
 Straight to the queen and palace shall I fly,
 Or yet more distant, to some lord apply ? 550

The prince return'd. Renown'd in days of yore
 Has stood our father's hospitable door ;
 No other roof a stranger shou'd receive,
 Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.
 But in my absence riot fills the place, 555
 Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face,
 From noiseful revel far remote she flies,
 But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.
 No — let Eurymachus receive my guest,
 Of nature courteous, and by far the best ; 560

ambush of the suitors. In the former voyage he steered a direct course ; in this he sails round about to the north of Ithaca, and therefore wastes more time in his voyage to it.

He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,
 And emulates her former husband's fame :
 With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,
 And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.

Thus speaking, on the right up-soar'd in air
 The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger ; 566

v. 561. *He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,
 And emulates her former husband's fame.*]

The words in the original are ἰδυσαμένη γέρας ἔξειν, which may either be rendered, *to obtain the honour of marrying Penelope*, agreeably to the former part of the verse ; or it means that Eurymachus has the fairest hopes to marry Penelope, and *obtain the throne* or γέρας of Ulysses. Hobbs translates the verse almost obscenely in the former sense :

— — — He best loves my mother ;
 And what my father did, would do the same.

The former in my judgment is the better construction, especially because it avoids a tautology, and gives a new image in the second part of the verse, very different from the sense expressed in the former part of it. But of all the meanings it is capable of I should prefer this ; “ That
 “ he courts her upon the most honourable principles, and
 “ seems desirous to have the honour of Ulysses, by imitat-
 “ ing his worth :” and this is agreeable to the character of Eurymachus, which distinguishes him from all the other suitors.

v. 566. *The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger.*] The augury is thus to be interpreted ; Ulysses is the hawk, the suitors the pigeon ; the hawk denotes the valour of Ulysses, being a bird of prey ; the pigeon represents the cowardice of the suitors, that bird being remarkable for her timorous

His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;
 The clotted feathers, scatter'd from above,
 Between the hero and the vessel pour 569
 Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r.

Th' observing augur took the prince aside,
 Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetick cry'd.
 Yon' bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,
 Rose ominous, nor flies without a God :
 No race but thine shall Ithaca obey, 575
 To thine, for ages, Heav'n decrees the sway.
 Succeed the omen, Gods ! (the youth rejoin'd)
 Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,

nature. The hawk flies on the right, to denote success to Ulysses.

Homer calls this bird the messenger of Apollo ; not that this augury was sent by that Deity, (though that be no forced interpretation) but the expression implies, that the hawk was sacred to Apollo ; as the peacock was to Juno, the owl to Pallas, and the eagle to Jupiter. Thus Ælian, anim. lib. x. c. 14. Αἰγύπτιοι τὸν ἰέρακα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τιμᾶν εἰκόσι, &c. and he gives the reason of it, for the hawk is the only bird that is capable to bear the lustre of the sun without inconvenience and difficulty ; the same is said of the eagle, but this hawk is reckoned to be of the *aquiline* kind. It was death among the Ægyptians to kill this bird, because it was dedicated to Apollo.

There is another reason why any bird that was taken notice of by way of augury, may be said to be the messenger of Apollo, that Deity presiding over divination.

v. 571. *Th' observing augur took the prince aside.*] The reason why Theoclymenus withdraws Telemachus, while

And soon each envy'd happiness attend
 The man, who calls Telemachus his friend. 580
 Then to Peiræus —— Thou whom time has prov'd
 A faithful servant, by thy prince belov'd !
 'Till we returning shall our guest demand,
 Accept this charge with honour, at our hand.

To this Peiræus ; Joyful I obey, 585
 Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.
 The presence of thy guest shall best reward
 (If long thy stay) the absence of my lord.

he interprets the augury, is not apparent at the first view, but he does it out of an apprehension lest he should be overheard by some of the company, who might disclose the secret to the suitors, and such a discovery might prove fatal to his own person, or to the fortunes of Telemachus. *Eustathius.*

v. 581. *Then to Peiræus — Thou whom time has prov'd, &c.]* We find that Telemachus intended to deliver Theoclymenus to the care of Eurymachus: what then is the reason why he thus suddenly alters that resolution, and intrusts him to Peiræus? This is occasioned by the discovery of the skill of Theoclymenus in augury: he fears lest the suitors should extort some prediction from him that might be detrimental to his affairs, or should he refuse it, to the person of Theoclymenus. *Eustathius.*

This book comprehends somewhat more than the space of two days and one night; for the vision appears to Telemachus a little before the dawn, in the night preceding the thirty-sixth day, and he lands in Ithaca, on the thirty-eighth in the morning.

With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Mount the tall bark and lanch into the sea. 590
All with obedient haste forsake the shores,
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the prince his sandals takes ;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin shakes. 594
They part ; while less'ning from the hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew :
The hero trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.

THE
SIXTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE
A R G U M E N T.

The Discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.

TELEMACHUS arriving at the lodge of Eumæus sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses commands him to discover himself to his son. The Princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.

T H E
S I X T E E N T H B O O K
O F T H E
O D Y S S E Y.

S O O N as the morning blush'd along the plains,
Ulyffes, and the monarch of the fwains,
Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,
And forth to pasture fend the bristly care.

v. 1. *Soon as the morning blush'd along the plains, &c.*] This book opens with the greatest simplicity imaginable. Dionysius Halicarnassus quotes the sixteen first lines to this purpose : the poet, says that author, describes a low and vulgar action, yet gives it an inexpressible sweetness; the ear is pleased with the harmony of the poetry, and yet there is nothing noble in the sentiments. Whence, continues he, does this arise? from the choice of the words, or from the placing of them? No one will affirm that it consists in the choice of the words, for the diction is entirely low and vulgar, so vulgar, that a common artificer or peasant, who never studied elocution, would use it in conversation; turn the verses into prose, and this will appear. There are no transpositions, no figures, no variety of dialect, nor any new and studied expressions. Where then is the beauty of the poetry? It must be entirely ascribed

The prince's near approach the dogs descry, 5
 And fawning round his feet confess their joy.

to the harmonious juncture and position of the words ; and he concludes that the *collocation* of words has a greater efficacy both in prose and poetry, than the *choice*. And indeed a judicious disposition of them (like what is feigned of Minerva in this book) makes a mean, deformed, and vulgar period, rise, like Ulysses from beggary, into pomp and dignity. This may be exemplified from the rules of mechanick arts ; an architect, when he gathers his materials for a building, has these three things chiefly in view : first, with what piece of stone, wood, &c. a correspondent piece will best agree : next he considers their several formations, and how it will best stand in the structure : and lastly, if any part of the materials suits not with the allotted place, he rejects it or new shapes it, till it agrees with the whole work : the same care is to be taken by a good writer : he is first to consider what noun or verb is to be joined to other nouns or verbs so fitly as not possibly to be placed more conveniently ; for a promiscuous connecting of words indiscriminately spoils both prose and poetry : next he considers the frame or turn of the verb or noun, and how it will stand in the place he allots it ; and if it suits not exactly, he changes it, sometimes by varying the numbers, sometimes the cases, and at other times the genders : and lastly, if a word prove so stubborn as not to bend to the level of the period, he entirely rejects it, and introduces another that preserves a due conformity ; or at least, if an inharmonious word be necessary, he places it so judiciously between more agreeable and tuneful words, that their harmony steals away our imagination from observing the roughness of the others : likewise generals, who in ordering the ranks of their soldiers, strengthen the weaker files by sustaining them with the stronger ; and by this method

Their gentle blandishment the king survey'd,
 Heard his resounding step, and instant said :

render the whole invincible. See likewise cap. xxxii. of Longinus, of the disposition of words.

v. 3. ——— *their meal prepare.*] The word in the original is ἄριστον, which here denotes very evidently the morning repast : it is used but in one other place in all Homer in this sense : Iliad, lib. xxiv. v. 124.

Ἐσσυμένως ἐπέοντο καὶ ἐνύοντο ἄριστον.

But we are not therefore to imagine that this was an usual meal ; Homer in other places expresses it by δεῖπνον, as is observed by Athenæus, lib. i.

Οἳ δ' ἄρα δεῖπνον ἔλοντ' ἀπὸ δ' αὐτῶν θωρήσσοιτο.

“ At the dawn of the day they took repast and armed themselves for battle.” The Greeks had three customary meals, which are distinctly mentioned by Palamedes in Æschylus,

Ἄριστα, δεῖπνα, δόρυαθ' αἰρεῖσθαι τρίτα.

Homer, adds Athenæus, mentions a fourth repast, lib. xvii. of the Odyssey :

———— σὺ δ' ἔρχεο δειλιήσας.

This the Romans call *commestationem*, we a collation, a repast taken, as the same author explains it, between dinner and supper : the word is derived ἀπὸ τῆς δειλῆς ὀψίας, or *the evening twilight*. But Athenæus refutes himself, lib. v. p. 193. I have already (says he) observed that the ancients eat thrice a day, and it is ridiculous to imagine that they eat four times from these words of Homer.

———— σὺ δ' ἔρχεο δειλιήσας.

Some well-known friend (Eumæus) bends this
way ;

His steps I hear ; the dogs familiar play. 10

While yet he spoke, the prince advancing drew
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.

Transported from his seat Eumæus sprung,
Dropp'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung ;

For that expression meant only that Eumæus should return in the evening, *δειλιὸν διατρέψας χρόνον*. But this is not the full import of the word *δειελήσας*, for it undoubtedly means, to take the evening repast or supper, as is evident from the conclusion of the seventeenth book of the *Odyssey* : *Return*, says Telemachus to Eumæus, *but first take refreshment* ; and Eumæus accordingly eats, and the poet immediately adds, *because the evening was come*, or *ἐπήλυθε δέειλον ἡμαρ*. However, in no sense can this word be brought to prove that the Greeks eat four times in the day : but if any person will imagine that it signifies in that place an immediate meal, all that can be gathered from it is, that Telemachus out of kindness to Eumæus commands him to eat before the usual hour of repast, before he leaves his palace : but Hesychius rightly interprets it by τὸ δειλιὸν λάβαν ἔμβρωμα, that is, *eating his supper* ; for as *δεῖπνον* and *ἄριστον* signify the dinner, so *δῶρον* and *δειλιὸν* denote the time of supper promiscuously.

I will add no more, but refer the reader for a full explanation of *δεῖπνον*, *ἄριστον* and *δειλιὸν*, to lib. viii. Quest. 6. of Plutarch's *Symposiacks*.

v. 14. *Dropp'd the full bowl* — —] In the original it is, Eumæus dropped the bowl as he tempered it with water. It was customary not to drink wine unmixed with water among the ancients ; there was no certain proportion observed in the mixture, some to one vessel of wine poured in two of water, others to two of wine, five of wa-

Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye 15

The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.

As some fond fire who ten long winters grieves,

From foreign climes an only son receives,

(Child of his age) with strong paternal joy

Forward he springs, and clasps the fav'rite boy: 20

So round the youth his arms Eumæus spread,

As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.

And is it thou! my ever-dear delight!

O art thou come to blefs my longing sight!

Never, I never hop'd to view this day, 25

When o'er the waves you plough'd the desp'rate way.

ter. Homer tells us that the wine of Maron was so strong as to require twenty measures of water to one of wine; but perhaps this is spoken hyperbolically, to shew the uncommon strength of it. The Lacedæmonians used to boil their wine till the fifth part was consumed, and then keeping it four years, drank it; but sometimes the Grecians drank it without water (but this they called reproachfully *ἐπισκυθίσαι*, or to act like a Scythian, from whom they borrowed the custom.) It was usual even for children to drink wine thus tempered amongst the Grecians, thus in this book Eurymachus,

— *ἐπέσχε δὲ οἶνον ἐρυθρόν.*

And Phœnix in the ninth of the Iliad, speaking of Achilles;

— *οἶνον ἐπίσχαν*

Πολλάκι μοι κατεδέυσας.

At Athens there was an altar erected to Bacchus *δρυθη*, because from thus tempering the wine men returned upright or sober from entertainments; and a law was enacted by Amphytrion, and afterwards revived by Solon, that no unmixed wine should be drunk at any entertainment.

Enter my child! beyond my hopes restor'd,
 O give these eyes to feast upon their lord.
 Enter, oh seldom seen! for lawless pow'rs
 Too much detain thee from these silvan bow'rs. 30
 The prince reply'd; Eumæus, I obey;
 To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.
 But say, if in the court the queen reside,
 Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride?

v. 33. — — — *if in the court the queen reside
 Securely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride?*]

Homer here makes use of a proverbial expression. It may thus be literally translated,

Or say if obstinate no more to wed,
 She dooms to spiders nets th' imperial bed:

Telemachus means by this question, if Penelope be determined no more to marry; for the marriage bed was esteemed so sacred, that upon the decease or absence of the husband, it remained unused.

Eustathius quotes the same expression from other authors of antiquity; thus Hesiod,

Ἐκ δ' ἀργέων ἐλασείας ἀράχνια.

“You shall clear the vessels from spiders webs;” meaning that *you shall have so full employment for your vessels, that the spiders shall no more spread their looms there.* And another poet praying for peace, wishes spiders may weave their nets upon the soldiers arms; ἔτερος ποιήτης ἐθέλων εἰρήνην εὔξασθαι, ἀράχνας ἐπιίχεται νήματα ὑφάναι τοῖς ὅπλοις. Thus we find among the Greeks it was an expression of dignity, and applied to great and serious occasions; I am not certain that it is so used by the Romans. Catullus uses it jocosely, speaking of his empty purse.

— — — “nam tui Catulli
 “Plenus sacculus est aranearum.”

Thus he : and thus the monarch of the swains ;
 Severely chaste Penelope remains, 36
 But lost to ev'ry joy, she wastes the day
 In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass
 The jav'lin, pointed with a star of brass) 40
 They reach'd the dome ; the dome with marble
 shin'd.

His seat Ulysses to the prince resign'd.
 Not so—(exclaims the prince with decent grace)
 For me, this house shall find an humbler place :
 T' usurp the honours due to silver hairs 45
 And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.

Plautus does the same in his *Aulularia* :

— — — “ anne quis ædes auferat ?
 “ Nam hic apud nos nihil est aliud quæsti furibus,
 “ Ita inaniis sunt oppletæ, atque araneis.”

I am doubtful if it be not too mean an image for English poetry.

v. 43. *Not so* — (exclaims the prince—] Nothing can more strongly represent the respect which antiquity paid to strangers, than this conduct of Telemachus : Ulysses is in rags, in the disguise of a beggar, and yet a prince refuses to take his seat. I doubt not but every good man will be pleased with such instances of benevolence and humanity to his fellow-creatures : one well-natured action is preferable to a thousand great ones, and Telemachus appears with more advantage upon this heap of hides and skins, than a tyrant upon his throne.

Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,
 And bids the rural throne with osiers rise.
 There sat the prince : the feast Eumæus spread,
 And heap'd the shining canisters with bread. 50
 Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,
 The frugal remnants of the former day.
 Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,
 Around whose verge a mimic ivy twines.
 And now the rage of thirst and hunger fled, 55
 Thus young Ulysses to Eumæus said.

Whence father, from what shore this stranger,
 say !

What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way?
 To human step our land impervious lies,
 And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise. 60

v. 52. *The frugal remnants of the former day.*] This entertainment is neither to be ascribed to parsimony nor poverty, but to the custom and hospitality of former ages. It was a common expression among the Greeks at table, *leave something for the Medes*; intimating that something ought to be left for a guest that might come accidentally. Plutarch in his seventh book of the *Sympos.* Question 3. commends this conduct. Eumæus (says that author) a wise scholar of a wise master, is no way discomposed when Telemachus pays him a visit, he immediately sets before him

The frugal remnants of the former day.

Besides the table was accounted sacred to the Gods, and nothing that was sacred was permitted to be empty; this was another reason why the ancients always reserved part of their provisions, not solely out of hospitality to men, but piety to the Gods.

The swain returns. A tale of sorrows hear ;
 In spacious Crete he drew his natal air,
 Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,
 For Heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.
 Half-breathless 'scaping to the land he flew 65
 From Theſprot mariners, a murd'rous crew.
 To thee, my ſon, the ſuppliant I reſign,
 I gave him my protection, grant him thine.

Hard taſk, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,
 Willing to aid, unable to defend. 70

v. 70. *Willing to aid.*—] It has been obſerved that Homer intended to give us the picture of a complete hero in his two poems, drawn from the characters of Achilles and Ulyſſes: Achilles has conſummate valour, but wants the wiſdom of Ulyſſes: Ulyſſes has courage, but courage inclining to caution and ſtratagem, as much as that of Achilles to raſhneſs. Virgil endeavoured to form a complete hero in Æneas, by joining in his perſon the forward courage of Achilles, with the wiſdom of Ulyſſes, and by this conduct gives us a perfect character. The ſame obſervation holds good with reſpect to the ſubordinate characters introduced into the two poems of the Iliad and Odysſey: and makes an eſſential difference between them: thus the Iliad exhibiting an example of heroick valour, almoſt all the characters are violent and heroick. Diomed, Ajax, Hector, &c. are all chiefly remarkable for courage: but the Odysſey being intended to repreſent the patience and wiſdom of an hero, almoſt all the characters are diſtinguiſhed by benevolence and humanity. Telemachus and Eumæus, Alcinous, Neſtor, and Menelaus are every where repreſented in the mild light of wiſdom and hoſpitality. This makes a continued difference of ſtyle in the poetry of the two poems, and the characters of the agents in the

Can strangers safely in the court reside,
 Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride?
 Ev'n I unsafe: the queen in doubt to wed,
 Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed?
 Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame,
 Deaf to the mighty Ulyssæan name. 75
 However, stranger! from our grace receive
 Such honours as besit a prince to give;

Odyssæy necessarily exhibit lectures of piety and morality. The reader should keep this in his view. In reading Homer, the Odyssæy is to be looked upon as a sequel of the *Iliad*, and then he will find in the two poems the perfection of human nature, consummate courage joined with consummate piety. He must be an unobserving reader, who has not taken notice of that *vein of humanity* that runs through the whole Odyssæy; and a bad man, that has not been pleas'd with it. In my opinion, Eumæus tending his herds is more amiable than Achilles in all his destructive glory. There is scarce a speech made in the Odyssæy by Eumæus, Telemachus or Ulysses, but what tends to the improvement of mankind: it was this that endeared the Odyssæy to the ancients, and Homer's sentences of morality were in every mouth, and introduced in all conversations for the better conduct of human life. This verse was thus applied by some of the ancients; a person being asked what was the duty of an orator, or pleader, answered from Homer,

"Λιδὲ ἀπαμύνασθαι ὅτε τις περὶτέξῃ χαλεπήνη.

In short, I will not deny but that the *Iliad* is by far the nobler poem with respect to the poetry; it is fit to be read by kings and heroes; but the Odyssæy is of use to all mankind, as it teaches us to be good men rather than great, and to prefer morality to glory.

Sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,
 And safe to sail with ornaments of love. 80

'Till then, thy guest amid the rural train
 Far from the court, from danger far, detain.

'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,
 And cloath the naked from th' inclement sky.
 Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs, 85

And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.

For should'st thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve
 I must behold it, and can only grieve.

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,
 O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain. 90

To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,
 With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.

v. 92. *With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.*] There is not a more spirited speech in all the *Odyssey* than this of Ulysses; his resentment arises from the last words of Telemachus, observes Eustathius :

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,
 O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

He is preparing his son for the destruction of the suitors, and animating him against despair by reason of their numbers. This he brings about, by representing that a brave man in a good cause prefers death to dishonour. By the same method Homer exalts the character of Ulysses: Telemachus thinks it impossible to resist the suitors; Ulysses not only resists them, but almost without assistance works their destruction. There is a fine contrast between the tried courage of Ulysses, and the inexperience of Telemachus.

Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue
 At once to pity and resent thy wrong.
 My heart weeps blood to see a soul so brave 95
 Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.
 But tell me, dost thou, prince, dost thou behold,
 And hear, their midnight revels uncontroll'd?
 Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,
 Or priests in fabled oracles advise? 100
 Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,
 Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour?
 O that I were from great Ulysses sprung,
 Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were strung;
 Or, Heav'ns! might he return! (and soon appear
 He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair) 106

v. 105. — — — (*And soon appear*

He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair.)]

Some antient criticks, as Eustathius informs us, rejected this verse, and thus read the passage :

Ἦ παῖς ἐξ Ὀδυσσεύος ἀμύμονος, ἢ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς;
 Αὐτίκ' ἐπειτ' ἂν ἔμεῖο κάκη πάροις ἀλλότριος φῶς.

Then the sense will be, *Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself, &c.*

For, add they, if this verse be admitted, it breaks the transport of Ulysses's resentment, and cools the warmth of the expression; Eustathius confesses that he was once of the same opinion, but afterwards seems dubious; for, continues he, Ulysses by saying, *Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself*, gave room to suspect that he was himself Ulysses; and therefore to efface this impression, he adds with great address,

Might he return, I yield my life a prey
 To my worst foe, if that avenging day
 Be not their last : but should I lose my life
 Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife, 110
 I chuse the nobler part, and yield my breath,
 Rather than bear dishonour, worse than death ;
 Than see the hand of violence invade
 The rev'rend stranger, and the spotless maid ;
 Than see the wealth of kings consum'd in waste,
 The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast. 116

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eye ;
 Sincere the youthful hero made reply.
 Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,
 Nor priests in fabled oracles advise ; 120

— — — (And soon appear
 He shall, I trust : a hero scorns despair)

And by this method removes all jealousy that might arise from his former expression. Dacier misrepresents Eustathius ; he says, *Il avoit donnè lieu à quelque subçon qu'il ne fust veritablement Ulyffe* ; whereas he directly says *μη̄̄ υποπτευθη̄̄ ὅτι Ὀδύσσευς ἔστιν ὁ λαλῶν*, that is, “ he uses this expression, that it may not be suspected that he is Ulysses who “ speaks :” in reality he inserts these words solely to avoid discovery, not judging it yet reasonable to reveal himself to Telemachus, much less to Eumæus.

v. 108. *To my worst foe.*] The words in Greek are *ἀλλήτρισι φῶς*, or, *may I fall by the hand of a stranger* : that is, by the worst of enemies, foreigners being usually the most barbarous enemies. This circumstance therefore aggravates the calamity. *Eustathius.*

Nor are my brothers who should aid my pow'r
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour.

Ah me ! I boast no brother ; Heav'n's dread King
Gives from our stock an only branch to spring :

Alone Laertes reign'd Arcefius' heir, 125

Alone Ulysses drew the vital air,

And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,

An unblest offspring of a fire unblest !

Each neighb'ring realm, conducive to our woe,

Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe : 130

The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,

And lofty Zacynth crown'd with shady hills,

Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade

Th' imperial scepter, and the regal bed :

The queen averse to love, yet aw'd by pow'r, 135

Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour :

Meantime their licence uncontroll'd, I bear ;

Ev'n now they envy me the vital air : }

But Heav'n will sure revenge, and Gods there are.

But go, Eumæus ! to the queen impart 140

Our safe return, and ease a mother's heart.

v. 127. *And I alone the bed connubial grac'd.*] Homer mentions but one son of Ulysses ; other authors name another, Archefilaus ; and Sophocles, Eurylaus slain by Telemachus ; but perhaps these descended not from Penelope. *Eustathius.*

v. 140. *But go, Eumæus ! to the queen impart.*] There is nothing more wonderful in Homer, than the distribution of his incidents ; and how fully must he be possessed of his whole subject, and take it in all at one view, to bring

Yet secret go ; for num'rous are my foes,
And here at least I may in peace repose.

To whom the swain ; I hear and I obey :
But old Laertes weeps his life away, 145
And deems thee lost : shall I my speed employ
To bless his age ; a messenger of joy ?
The mournful hour that tore his son away
Sent the sad fire in solitude to stray ;
Yet busied with his slaves, to ease his woe, 150
He dress'd the vine, and bade the garden blow,
Nor food nor wine refus'd : but since the day
That you to Pylos plough'd the wat'ry way,
Nor wine nor food he tastes ; but sunk in woes,
Wild springs the vine, no more the garden blows :
Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost, 156
Pensive and pale he wanders, half a ghost.

about the several parts of it naturally? Minerva in the beginning of the fifteenth book commanded Telemachus to dispatch Eumæus to Penelope, to inform her of his return. Here this command is executed : but is this all the use the poet makes of that errand? It is evident it is not : this command furnishes him with a natural occasion for the removal of Eumæus while Ulysses discovers himself to Telemachus. But why might not the discovery have been made before Eumæus? It was suitable to the cautious character of Ulysses not to trust the knowledge of his person to too many people: besides, if he had here revealed himself to Eumæus, there would not have been room for the discovery which is made in the future parts of the *Odyssey*, and consequently the reader had been robbed of the pleasure of it : and it must be allowed, that the several concealments and discoveries of Ulysses through the *Odyssey* add no small pleasure and beauty to it.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)

Yet cease to go—what man so blest but mourns?

Were ev'ry wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies, 160

This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes.

v. 159. *Yet cease to go—what man so blest but mourns?* Eustathius reads the words differently, either ἀχρύνμενον πρὸς, or ἀχρύνμενοι πρὸς. If we use the former reading, it will be understood according to the recited translation; if the latter, it must then be referred to Telemachus, and imply, *let us cease to inform Laertes, though we grieve for him.* I suppose some criticks were shocked at the words in the former sense, and thought it cruel in Telemachus, not to relieve the sorrows of Laertes, which were occasioned chiefly through fondness to his person: Dacier is fully of this opinion: Eustathius prefers neither of the lections; I doubt not but Homer wrote ἀχρύνμενον πρὸς; this agrees with the whole context.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)

Yet cease to go—what man so blest but mourns?

Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,

This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes.

And as for the cruelty of Telemachus, in forbidding Eumæus to go to Laertes, there is no room for this objection: he guards against it, by requesting Penelope to give him immediate information; which might be done almost as soon by a messenger from her, as by Eumæus. Besides, such a message to Laertes would be entirely foreign to the poem; for his knowledge of the return of Telemachus could contribute nothing to the design of the Odyssey: whereas the information given to Penelope has this effect; it puts the suitors upon new measures, and instructs her how to regulate her own conduct with regard to them; and therefore the poet judiciously dwells upon this, and passes over the other.

But to the queen with speed dispatchful bear
 Our safe return, and back with speed repair :
 And let some handmaid of her train resort
 To good Laertes in his rural court. 165

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay
 He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away :
 Then from the heav'ns the martial Goddess flies
 Thro' the wide fields of air, and cleaves the skies ;
 In form, a virgin in soft beauty's bloom, 170
 Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

v. 170. *In form, a virgin—*] Some of the antient philosophers thought the poets guilty of impiety, in representing the Gods assuming human appearances; Plato in particular (lib. ii. de Repub.) speaks with great severity. “ If a God (says that author) changes his own shape, “ must he assume a more or less perfect form? undoubt- “ edly a shape less perfect; for a Deity, as a Deity, can “ want no perfection; therefore all change must be for “ the worse: now it is absurd to imagine that a Deity “ can be willing to assume imperfection, for this would be “ a degradation unworthy of a divine power, and conse- “ quently it is absurd to imagine that a Deity can be wil- “ ling to change the form of a Deity; it therefore follows, “ that the Gods enjoying a perfection of nature, must “ eternally and unchangeably appear in it. Let no poet “ therefore (meaning Homer) persuade you that the Gods “ assume the form of strangers, and are visible in such “ appearances.” It must be confessed, that if Plato had thus spoken only to refute the absurd opinions of anti- quity, which imagined the Gods to assume unworthy shapes of bulls, dragons, swans, &c. only to perform some rape, or action unbecoming a Deity, reason would have

Alone to Ithacus she stood display'd,
 But unapparent as a viewless shade
 Escap'd Telemachus: (the Pow'rs above
 Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move) 175
 The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread
 Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.

been on his side: but the argument proves too much; it supposes that a Deity must lose his perfections by any appearance, but of a Deity; which is an error: if a God acts suitably to the character of a God, where is the degradation? Aristotle was of this judgment, in opposition to his master Plato; and thought it no diminution to a God to appear in the shape of man, the glory of the creation: in reality, it is a great honour to Homer, that his opinions agree with the verity of the scriptures, rather than the conjectures of philosophers; nay, it is not impossible but these relations might be borrowed from the sacred history: it being manifest that Homer had been in Ægypt, the native country of Moses, in whose writings there are frequent instances of this nature.

v. 176. *The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread
 Of pow'r divine—*]

This may seem a circumstance unworthy of poetry, and ridiculous to ascribe a greater sagacity to the brute creation, than to man; but it may be answered, that it was the design of the Goddess to be invisible only to Telemachus, and consequently she was visible to the dogs. But I am willing to believe that there is a deeper meaning, and a beautiful moral couched under this story: and perhaps Homer speaks thus, to give us to understand, that the brute creation itself confesses the divinity. *Dacier.*

The Goddess, beck'ning, waves her deathless hands;
Dauntless the king before the Goddess stands.

Then why (she said) O favour'd of the skies!
Why to thy god-like son this long disguise? 181
Stand forth reveal'd: with him thy cares employ
Against thy foes; be valiant, and destroy!
Lo I descend in that avenging hour,
To combat by thy side thy guardian Pow'r. 185

She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold;
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold;

v. 178. *The Goddess, beck'ning, waves her deathless hands.*] The Goddess evidently acts thus, that Telemachus might not hear her speak to Ulysses; for this would have made the discovery, and precluded that beautiful interview between Ulysses and Telemachus that immediately follows. It is for the same reason that she conceals herself from Telemachus, for the discovery must have been fully and convincingly made by the appearance and veracity of a Deity; and then there could have been no room for all those doubts and fears of Telemachus, that enliven and beautify the manner of the discovery. The whole relation is indeed an allegory: the wisdom of Ulysses (in poetry, Minerva) suggests to him, that this is a proper time to reveal himself to Telemachus; the same wisdom (or Minerva) instructs him to dress himself like a king, that he may find the readier credit with his son: in this dress he appears a new man, young and beautiful, which gives occasion to Telemachus to imagine him a Deity; especially because he was an infant when his father sailed to Troy, and therefore though he now appears like Ulysses, Telemachus does not know him to be his father. This is the naked story, when stript of its poetical ornaments.

Then with surprife (furprife chaftis'd by fears)
 How art thou chang'd ! (he cry'd) a God appears !
 Far other vefts thy limbs majestic grace,
 Far other glories lighten from thy face !
 If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care 200
 Lo ! I the ready facrifice prepare :
 Lo ! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy fhrine,
 To win thy grace : O fave us, Pow'r divine !

Few are my days, Ulyffes made reply,
 Nor I, alas ! descendant of the fky. 205
 I am thy father. O my fon ! my fon !
 That father, for whose fake thy days have run
 One fcene of woe ; to endless cares confign'd,
 And outrag'd by the wrongs of bafe mankind.

Hear from thy heav'ns above, O warrior Maid,
 Descend once more propitious to my aid !

It is not to be imagined that Telemac hus would have preferred this prayer, if the prefence of the Deity denoted death, or fome great calamity ; and all the heroes throughout the Iliad esteem fuch intercourfes as their glory, and converse with the Gods without any apprehenfions. But whence then proceeds this fear of Telemachus ? entirely from a reverential awe and his own modefty while he ftands in the prefence of a Deity ; for fuch he believes Ulyffes. The words of Telemachus agree with his behaviour ; he fpeaks the language of a man in surprife : it is this surprife at the fudden change of Ulyffes, that firft makes him imagine him a Deity, and upon that imagination offer him facrifice and prayer ; the whole behaviour paints the nature of man under surprife, and which transports the fpeaker into vehemence and emotion.

Then rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy 210
With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.

Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew:
He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.

Ah me ! (exclaims the prince with fond desire)

'Thou art not——no, thou canst not be my fire. 215

Heav'n such illusion only can impose,

By the false joy to aggravate my woes.

Who but a God can change the general doom,

And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom ?

Late, worn with years, in weeds obscene you trod ;

Now, cloath'd in majesty, you move a God ! 221

Forbear, he cry'd ; for Heav'n reserve that name,
Give to thy father but a father's claim :

Other Ulysses shalt thou never see,

I am Ulysses, I (my son) am he. 225

Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,

'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.

Pallas, unconquer'd Maid, my frame surrounds

With grace divine ; her pow'r admits no bounds :

She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed ; 230

Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.

The Gods with ease frail man depress or raise,

Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and sat. The prince with transport flew,
Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek be-
dew ; 235

Nor less the father pour'd a social flood !

They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.

As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,
Or parent vultur, mourns her ravish'd young ;

v. 238. *As the bold eagle*—] This is a beautiful comparison ; but to take its full force, it is necessary to observe the nature of this φήνη or *vultur* : Homer does not compare Ulysses to that bird merely for its dignity, it being of the aquiline kind, and therefore the king of birds ; but from the knowledge of the nature of it, which doubles the beauty of the allusion : this bird is remarkable for the love it bears towards its young : *Tearing open her own thigh, she feeds her young with her own blood* : thus also another author ;

Τὸν μηρὸν ἐκλέμνοντεέ, ἰμαλωμένοις
Γάλακτι ὀλοκοῖς ζωπύρεσι τὰ βρέφη.

Femore exsecto, sanguineo lactis defluxu suos fœtus refocillant.
And the Ægyptians made the vultur their hieroglyphic, to represent a compassionate nature. This gives a reason why this bird is introduced with peculiar propriety to represent the fondness of Ulysses for Telemachus. But where is the point of the similitude ? Ulysses embraces his son, but the vultur is said to mourn the loss of her young : Eustathius answers, that the sorrow alone, and vehemence of it, is intended to be illustrated by the comparison ; I think he should have added the affection Ulysses bears to Telemachus.

It is observable, that Homer inserts very few similitudes in his *Odyssey*, though they occur frequently almost in every book of the *Iliad*. The *Odyssey* is wrote with more simplicity, and consequently there is less room for allusions. If we observe the similies themselves inserted in each poem, we shall find the same difference : in the *Iliad* they are drawn from lions, storms, torrents, conflagrations, thunder, &c. In the *Odyssey*, from lower objects, from an heap of thorns, from a ship-wright ply-

They cry, they scream, their unfledg'd brood a
 prey 240
 To some rude churl, and borne by stealth away ;

ing the wimble, an armourer tempering iron, a matron weeping over her dying husband, &c. The similes are likewise generally longer in the Iliad than the Odyssey, and less resemblance between the thing illustrated, and the illustration; the reason is, in the Iliad the similitudes are introduced to illustrate some great and noble object, and therefore the poet proceeds till he has raised some noble image to inflame the mind of the reader; whereas in these calmer scenes the poet keeps closer to the point of allusion, and needs only to represent the object, to render it entertaining: by the former conduct he raises our admiration above the subject, by adding foreign embellishments; in the latter he brings the copy as close as possible to the original, to possess us with a true and equal image of it.

It has been objected by a French critick, that Homer is blameable for too great a length in his similitudes; that in the heat of an action he stops short, and turns to some allusion, which calls off our attention from the main subject. It is true, comparisons ought not to be too long, and are not to be placed in the heat of an action, as Mr. Dryden observes, but when it begins to decline: thus in the first *Æneis*, when the storm is in its fury, the poet introduces no comparison, because nothing can be more impetuous than the storm itself; but when the heat of the description abates, then, lest we should cool too soon, he renews it by some proper similitude, which still keeps up our attention, and fixes the whole upon our minds. The similitude before us is thus placed at the conclusion of the hero's lamentation, and the poet by this method leaves the whole deeply fixed upon the memory. Virgil has imitated this comparison in his fourth *Georgic*, but very ju-

So they aloud : and tears in tides had run,
 Their griefs unfinish'd with the setting sun :
 But checking the full torrent in its flow,
 The prince thus interrupts the solemn woe. 245

diciously substituted the nightingale in the place of the vultur, that bird being introduced to represent the mournful musick of Orpheus.

- “ Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela sub umbrâ
- “ Amissos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator
- “ Observans nido implumes detraxit : at illa
- “ Flet noctem, &c.

Nothing can be sweeter than this comparison of Virgil, but the learned Huetius thinks he has found a notorious blunder in it: this nightingale (says he) in the first line sits in the shade of a poplar, and yet in the fourth she mourns by night, *flet noctem*. It is evident that Monsieur Huet mistakes the word *umbra* for the shade of a tree, which it casts while the sun shines upon it ; whereas it only means that the bird sings *sub foliis*, or concealed in the leaves of it, which may be done by night as well as by day : but if it be thought that this is not a sufficient answer, the passage may be thus understood : the nightingale mourning under the shade of a poplar, &c. ceases not all night, or *flet noctem* ; that is, she begins her song in the evening by day, but mourns all night. Either of these answers are sufficient for Virgil's vindication.

v. 245. *The prince thus interrupts the solemn woe.*] It does not appear at first view why the poet makes Telemachus recover himself from his transport of sorrow sooner than Ulysses : is Telemachus a greater master of his passions ? or is it to convince Ulysses of his son's wis-

What ship transported thee, O father, say,
And what blest'd hands have oar'd thee on the way?

All, all (Ulysses instant made reply)
I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!
Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd, 250
A nation ever to the stranger kind;
Wrapt in th' embrace of sleep, the faithful train
O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign:
Embroider'd vestures, gold, and brags are laid
Conceal'd in caverns in the silvan shade. 255

dom, as Eustathius conjectures? this can scarce be suppos'd, Ulysses being superior in wisdom. I would chuse rather to ascribe it to human nature; for it has been observed, that affection seldom so strongly ascends, as it descends: the child seldom loves the father so tenderly, as the father the child: this observation has been made from the remotest antiquity. And it is wisely designed by the great Author of our natures; for in the common course of life, the child must bury the parent: it is therefore a merciful dispensation, that the tie of blood and affection should be loosened by degrees, and not torn violently asunder in the full strength of it. It is expected that aged persons should die, their loss therefore grows more familiar to us, and it loses much of its horreur through the long expectation of it.

v. 250. *Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd.*] Here is a repetition of what the reader knows entirely, from many parts of the preceding story; but it being necessary in this place, the poet judiciously reduces it into the compass of six lines, and by this method avoids prolixity. *Eustathius.*

Hither, intent the rival rout to slay,
 And plan the scene of death, I bend my way:
 So Pallas wills—but thou, my son, explain
 The names, and numbers of th' audacious train;
 'Tis mine to judge if better to employ 267
 Assistant force, or singly to destroy.

O'er earth (returns the prince) refounds thy name,
 Thy well-try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame,
 Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost ;
 Can we engage, not decads, but an host? 265
 Can we alone in furious battle stand,
 Against that num'rous, and determin'd band ?
 Hear then their numbers : from Dulichium came
 Twice twenty-six, all peers of mighty name,
 Six are their menial train : twice twelve the boast
 Of Samos ; twenty from Zacynthus coast : 271

v. 268. *Hear then their numbers—*] According to this catalogue, the suitors with their attendants (the two sewers, and Medon, and Phemius) are a hundred and eighteen : but the two last are not to be taken for the enemies of Ulysses ; and therefore are not involved in their punishment in the conclusion of the *Odyssey*. *Eustathius*.

Spondanus mistakes this passage egregiously.

Μέδων κῆρυξ ἢ Δείῳ ἀοιδός.

He understands it thus, “ Medon who was an herald and “ a divine bard” *Præco unus qui & idem Musicus* : it is true, the construction will bear this interpretation ; but it is evident from the latter part of the *xxiid* *Odyssey*, that the κῆρυξ and the ἀοιδός were two persons, namely, Medon and Phemius : Medon acts all along as a friend to Pene-

And twelve our country's pride : to these belong
 Medon and Phemius skill'd in heav'nly song.
 Two sew'rs from day to day the revels wait,
 Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state. 275
 With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,
 Were by false courage unreveng'd to die.
 Then what assistant pow'rs you boast, relate,
 Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate. 279

Mark well my voice, Ulysses straight replies:
 What need of aids, if favour'd by the Skies?
 If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,
 By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove.
 Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)
 Against the banded pow'rs of all mankind : 285
 They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds;
 Wither the strength of man, and awe the Gods.

Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might
 We rise terrifick to the task of fight.

lope and Telemachus, and Phemius is affirmed to be detained by the suitors involuntarily, and consequently they are both guiltless.

v. 288. *Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might
 We rise terrifick to the task of fight.*]

This whole discourse between Ulysses and Telemachus is introduced to prepare the reader for the catastrophe of the poem : Homer judiciously interests Heaven in the cause, that the reader may not be surpris'd at the event, when he sees such numbers fall by the hands of these heroes : he consults probability, and as the poem now draws to a conclusion, sets the assistance of Heaven full before the reader.

But thou, when morn salutes th' aerial plain, 290
The court revisit and the lawless train :

It is likewise very artful to let us into some knowledge of the event of the poem; all care must be taken that it be rather guessed than known. If it be entirely known, the reader finds nothing new to awaken his attention; if on the contrary it be so intricate, that the event cannot possibly be guessed at, we wander in the dark, and are lost in uncertainty. The art of the poet consists not in concealing the event intirely: but when it is in some measure foreseen, in introducing such a number of incidents that now bring us almost into the sight of it, then by new obstacles perplex the story to the very conclusion of the poem; every obstacle, and every removal of it fills us with surprize, with pleasure or pain alternately, and consequently calls up our whole attention. This is admirably described by Vida, lib. ii.

“ — — — Eventus nonnullis sæpe canendo
“ Indiciis porrò ostendunt, in luce malignâ
“ Sublustrique; aliquid dant cernere noctis in umbrâ”.

Th' event should glimmer with a dubious ray,
Not hid in clouds nor glare in open day.

This rule he afterwards illustrates by a very happy similitude.

“ Haud aliter longinqua petit qui forte viator
“ Mænia, si positas altis in collibus arces
“ Nunc etiam dubias oculis videt, incipit ultro
“ Lætior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,
“ Quàm cùm nusquam ullæ cernuntur quas adit arces,
“ Obscurum sed iter tendit convallibus imis.”

The conduct both of Virgil and Homer are agreeable to this observation; for instance, Anchises and Tiresias in the shades, foretel Æneas and Ulysses that all their troubles

Me thither in disguise Eumæus leads,
 An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.
 There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age ;
 Bear it, my son ! repress thy rising rage. 295
 If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel ;
 Bear it, my son ! howe'er thy heart rebel.

shall end prosperously, that the one shall found the Roman empire, the other regain his kingdoms ; but the means being kept concealed, our appetite is rather whetted than cloyed, to know by what means these events are brought about : thus, as in Vida's allusion, they shew us the city at a great distance, but how we are to arrive at it, by what roads they intend to guide us to it, this they keep concealed ; the journey discovers itself, and every step we advance leads us forward, and shews where we are to take the next : neither does the poet directly lead us in the straight path : sometimes we are as it were in a labyrinth, and we know not how to extricate ourselves out of it ; sometimes he carries us into bye-ways, and we almost lose sight of the direct way, and then suddenly they open into the chief road, and convey us to the journey's end. In this consists the skill of the poet ; he must form probable intricacies, and then solve them probably ; he must set his hero in dangers, and then bring him out of them with honour. This observation is necessary to be applied to all those passages in the *Odyssey*, where the event of it is obscurely foretold, and which some tasteless critics have blam'd, as taking away the curiosity of the reader by an unseasonable discovery.

v. 296. *If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,
 Bear it my son ! howe'er thy heart rebel.]*

Plutarch in his *Treatise upon reading Poems*, observes the wisdom of Ulysses in these instructions : he is the per-

Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain
 Their lawless insults, tho' thou strive in vain:
 For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call, 300
 And vengeance strikes whom Heav'n has doom'd
 to fall.

Once more attend: When * She whose pow'r
 inspires

The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires;
 I give the sign: that instant, from beneath,
 Aloft convey the instruments of death, 305

son who is more immediately injured, yet he not only restrains his own resentment, but that of Telemachus: he perceives that his son is in danger of flying out into some passion, he therefore very wisely arms him against it. Men do not put bridles upon horses when they are already running with full speed, but they bridle them before they bring them out to the race: this very well illustrates the conduct of Ulysses; he fears the youth of Telemachus may be too warm, and through an unseasonable ardour at the sight of his wrongs, betray him to his enemies; he therefore persuades him to patience and calmness, and predisposes his mind with rational considerations to enable him to encounter his passions, and govern his resentment.

v. 304. — — — *That instant, from beneath,
 Aloft convey the instruments of death.]*

These ten lines occur in the beginning of the nineteenth book, and the ancients (as Eustathius informs us) were of opinion, that they are here placed improperly; for how, say they, should Ulysses know that the arms were in a lower apartment, when he was in the country, and had

* Minerva.

Armour and arms ; and if mistrust arise,
Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise.

“ These glitt’ring weapons, ere he fail’d to

“ Troy,

“ Ulysses view’d with stern heroic joy :

“ Then, beaming o’er th’ illumin’d wall they

“ shone :

“ Now dust dishonours, all their lustre gone.

“ I bear them hence (so Jove my soul inspires)

“ From the pollution of the fuming fires ;

“ Lest when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood

“ Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with
blood ;

315

“ Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite

“ The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.”

not yet seen his palace? But this is no real objection ; his repository of arms he knew was in the lower apartment, and therefore it was rational to conclude that the arms were in it. The verses are proper in both places ; here Ulysses prepares Telemachus against the time of the execution of his designs ; in the nineteenth book that time is come, and therefore he repeats his instructions,

v. 316. *Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite
The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.]*

This seems to have been a proverbial expression, at least it has been so used by latter writers : the observation holds true to this day, and it is manifest that more men fall by the sword in countries where the inhabitants daily wear swords, than in those where a sword is thought no part of dress or ornament. *Dacier.*

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive :
 For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.
 Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield, 320
 A pointed jav'lin, and a fenciful shield.
 But by my blood that in thy bosom glows,
 By that regard a son his father owes ;
 The secret, that thy father lives, retain
 Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train ; 325
 Hide it from all ; ev'n from Eumæus hide,
 From my dear father, and my dearer bride.
 One care remains, to note the loyal few
 Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew ;
 And noting, ere we rise in vengeance, prove 330
 Who loves his prince ; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth : to emulate I aim
 The brave and wise, and my great father's fame.

v. 324. *The secret, that thy father lives, retain
 Lock'd in thy bosom ———]*

This injunction of secrecy is introduced by Ulysses with the utmost solemnity ; and it was very necessary that it should be so ; the whole hopes of his re-establishment depending upon it : besides, this behaviour agrees with the character of Ulysses, which is remarkable for disguise and concealment. The poet makes a further use of it ; namely, to give him an opportunity to describe at large the several discoveries made to Penelope, Laertes, and Eumæus personally by Ulysses, in the sequel of the *Odyssey*, which are no small ornaments to it ; yet must have been omitted, or have lost their effect, if the return of Ulysses had been made known by Telemachus ; this would have been like discovering the plot before the be-

But re-consider, since the wisest err,
 Veng'ance resolv'd, 'tis dang'rous to defer. 335
 What length of time must we consume in vain,
 Too curious to explore the menial train?
 While the proud foes, industrious to destroy
 Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy,
 Suffice it in this exigence alone 340
 To mark the damsels that attend the throne :
 Dispers'd the youth resides ; their faith to prove
 Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from
 Jove.

ginning of the play. At the same time this direction is an excellent rule to be observed in management of all weighty affairs, the success of which chiefly depends upon secrecy.

v. 334. *But re-consider* —] The poet here describes Telemachus rectifying the judgment of Ulysses ; is this any disparagement to that hero ? It is not ; but an exact representation of human nature ; for the wisest men may receive, in particular cases, instructions from men less wise ; and the eye of the understanding in a young man, may sometimes see further than that of age ; that is, in the language of the poet, a wise and mature Ulysses may sometimes be instructed by a young and unexperienced Telemachus.

v. 343. *If thou hast spoke from Jove.*] The expression in the Greek is obscure, and it may be asked, to what refers Διὸς τέρας ? Dacier renders it, *S'il vray que vous ayez vu un prodige* ; or “ if it be true that you have seen a “ prodigy :” now there is no mention of any prodigy seen by Ulysses in all this interview, and this occasions the obscurity ; but it is implied, for Ulysses directly pro-

While in debate they waste the hours away,
 Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay ; 345
 With speed they guide the vessel to the shores ;
 With speed debarking land the naval stores ;

mises the assistance of Jupiter ; and how could he depend upon it, but by some prodigy from Jupiter ? Eustathius thus understands the words : Τέρας, ἐξ ἧ ἐξουόμενος ἔφησ' ἀμύλορα τὸν Διὰ ἡμῶν ἔσεσθαι. And then the meaning will be, “ If the prodigy from Jupiter be evident, there is no occasion to concern ourselves about the household train.” But then does not that expression imply doubt, and a jealousy, that Ulysses might possibly depend too much upon supernatural assistance ? It only insinuates, that he ought to be certain in the interpretation of the prodigy, but Telemachus refers himself intirely to Ulysses, and acquiesces in his judgment.

v. 345. *Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay.*] It is manifest that this vessel had spent the evening of the preceding day, the whole night, and part of the next morning, in sailing from the place where Telemachus embarked : for it is necessary to remember that Telemachus, to avoid the suitors, had been obliged to fetch a large compass, and land upon the northern coast of Ithaca ; and consequently the vessel was necessitated to double the whole isle on the western side to reach the Ithacan bay. This is the reason that it arrives not till the day afterwards, and that the herald dispatched by the associates of Telemachus, and Eumæus from the country, meet upon the road, as they go to carry the news of the return of Telemachus to Penelope. It is likewise evident that the lodge of Eumæus was not far distant from the palace ; for he sets out toward the city after eating in the morning, and passing some time in conference with Telemachus, delivers his message, and returns in the evening of the same day.

Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,
 And trust the presents to his friendly care.
 Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart 350
 Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart ;
 Lest a sad prey to ever-musing cares,
 Pale grief destroy what time a-while forbears.

Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,
 And cries aloud ; Thy son, oh queen, returns : 355
 Eumæus sage approach'd th' imperial throne,
 And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,
 Then measur'd back the way—The suitor band
 Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand ;

v. 355. *And cries aloud ; Thy son, oh queen, returns.*] This little circumstance distinguishes characters, and gives variety to poetry : it is a kind of painting, which always varies its figures by some particular ornament, or attitude, so as no two figures are alike : the contrary conduct would make an equal confusion both in poetry and painting, and an indistinction of persons and characters. I will not promise that these particularities are of equal beauty, as necessity, especially in modern languages ; the Greek is always flowing, sonorous, and harmonious ; the language, like leaves, oftentimes conceals barrenness, and a want of fruit, and renders the sense at least beautiful, if not profitable ; this is wanted in some degree in English poetry, where it is not always in our power to conceal the nakedness with ornaments : this particularity before us is of absolute necessity, and could not well be avoided ; the indiscretion of the herald in speaking aloud, discovers the return of Telemachus to the suitors, and is the incident that brings about their following debates, and furnishes out the entertainment of the succeeding part of this book.

And issuing from the dome, before the gate, 360
 With clouded looks, a pale assembly sat.

At length Eurymachus. Our hopes are vain ;
 Telemachus in triumph fails the main.

Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display ;
 Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news convey ! 365

Scarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand
 Amphinomus survey'd th' associate band ;
 Full to the bay within the winding shores,
 With gather'd sails they stood, and lifted oars.

O friends ! he cry'd, elate with rising joy, 370
 See to the port secure the vessel fly !

Some God has told them, or themselves survey
 The bark escap'd ; and measure back their way.

Swift at the word descending to the shores,
 They moor the vessel and unlade the stores : 375
 Then moving from the strand, apart they sat,
 And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.

Lives then the boy ? he lives (Antinous cries)
 The care of Gods and fav'rite of the skies.
 All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels
 Aurora flam'd above the eastern hills, 380

And from the lofty brow of rocks by day
 Took-in the ocean with a broad survey :
 Yet safe he fails ! the Pow'rs celestial give
 To shun the hidden snares of death, and live. 385

But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed,
 Be now the scene of instant death decreed :

Hope ye success? undaunted crush the foe.
 Is he not wise? know this, and strike the blow.
 Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws 390
 The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause?

v. 391. *The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause.*] This verse is inserted with great judgment, and gives an air of probability to the whole relation: for if it be asked why the suitors defer to seize the supreme power, and to murder Telemachus, they being so superior in number? Antinous himself answers, that they fear the people, who favour the cause of Telemachus, and would revenge his injuries: it is for this reason that they formed the ambush by sea; and for this reason Antinous proposes to intercept him in his return from the country: they dare not offer open violence, and therefore make use of treachery. This speech of Antinous forms a short under-plot to the poem; it gives us pain (says Eustathius) for Telemachus, and holds us in suspense till the intricacy is unravelled by Amphinomus.

The whole harangue is admirable in Homer: the diction is excellently suited to the temper of Antinous, who speaks with precipitation: his mind is in agitation and disorder, and consequently his language is abrupt, and not allowing himself time to explain his thoughts at full length, he falls into ellipses and abbreviations. For instance, he is to speak against Telemachus, but his contempt and resentment will not permit him to mention his name, he therefore calls him τὸν ἄνδρα; thus in μήτι κακὸν ῥέζωσι, δέδοικα is understood, thus likewise in this verse,

Ἄλλ' ἄγετε πρὶν κείνον ἐμηγυρίσασθαι Ἀχαιῶς
 Ἐἰς ἀγορὴν ———

the word ἰλοθρεύσωμεν, οἱ ἀνέλωμεν, must be understood, to make the sense intelligible. Thus also after εἰ δ' ὑμῖν ἔδει μῦθος ἀφανδάνει, to make Ἄλλὰ in the next sentence begin it

Strike, ere, the states conven'd, the foe betray
 Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.
 Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly
 Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown sky ? 395
 The brave prevent misfortune ; then be brave,
 And bury future danger in his grave.
 Returns he ? ambush'd we'll his walk invade,
 Or where he hides in solitude and shade :
 And give the palace to the queen a dow'r, 400
 Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.
 But if submissive you resign the sway,
 Slaves to a boy ; go, flatter and obey.
 Retire we instant to our native reign,
 Nor be the wealth of kings consum'd in vain ; 405
 Then wed whom choice approves : the queen be
 giv'n
 To some blest prince, the prince decreed by
 Heav'n.

significantly, we must supply καὶ εἰ δοκεῖ καλὸν ὁ φόνος ; then the sense is complete ; *If this opinion displease, and his death appear not honourable, but you would have him live, &c.* otherwise ἀλλὰ βέλεσθε must be construed like βάλισθε δὲ ; and lastly, to image the disorder of Antinous more strongly, Homer inserts a false quantity, by making the first syllable in βέλεσθε short. Antinous attends not, through the violence of his spirit, to the words he utters, and therefore falls into this error, which excellently represents it. It is impossible to retain these ellipses in the translation, but I have endeavoured to shew the warmth of the speaker, by putting the words into interrogations, which are always uttered with vehemence, and are signs of hurry and precipitation.

Abash'd, the suitor train his voice attends ;
 'Till from his throne Amphinomus ascends,
 Who o'er Dulichium stretch'd his spacious reign, 410
 A land of plenty, blest with ev'ry grain :
 Chief of the numbers who the queen address,
 And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing least.
 Soft were his words ; his actions wisdom sway'd ;
 Graceful a-while he paus'd, then mildly said. 415

O friends forbear ! and be the thought with-
 stood :

'Tis horrible to shed imperial blood !
 Consult we first th' all-seeing Pow'rs above,
 And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.

v. 413. *And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing least.*] We are not to gather from this expression, that Penelope had any particular tenderness for Amphinomus, but it means only that he was a person of some justice and moderation. At first view, there seems no reason why the poet should distinguish Amphinomus from the rest of the suitors, by giving him this humane character ; but in reality there is an absolute necessity for it. Telemachus is doomed to die by Antinous : here is an intricacy formed, and how is that hero to be preserved with probability ? The poet ascribes a greater degree of tenderness and moderation to one of the suitors, and by this method preserves Telemachus. Thus we see the least circumstance in Homer has its use and effect ; the art of a good painter is visible in the smallest sketch, as well as in the largest draught.

v. 419. *And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.*] Strabo, lib. vii. quotes this verse of Homer, and tells us that some criticks thus read it.

If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies ; 420

If they forbid, I war not with the skies:

He said : The rival train his voice approv'd,
And rising instant to the palace mov'd.

Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they sat,
Recumbent on the shining thrones of state. 425

Εἴ μὲν κ' αἰνήσωσι Διὸς μέγαλοιο τομῆροι.

preferring *τομῆροι* to *Θέμιστες*; for, add they, *Θέμιστες* nowhere in Homer signifies oracles, but constantly laws or councils. Tmarus or Tomarus was a mountain on which the oracle of Jupiter stood, and in process of time it was used to denote the oracles themselves. *Τόμωρος* is formed like the word *δικαῖρος*, the former signifies *custos Tmari*, the latter *custos domūs*: in this sense Amphinomus advises to consult the Dodonian oracles, which were given from the mountain Tmarus: but, adds Strabo, Homer is to be understood more plainly; and by *Θέμιστες*, the councils, the will, and decisions of the oracles are implied, for those decisions were held as laws; thus *βελή*, as well as *Θέμιστες*, signifies the Dodonian oracles.

Ἐκ δρυὸς ὑψικόμοιο Διὸς βελήν ἐπάκουσαι.

Neither is it true (observes the scholiast upon Strabo) that *Θέμιστες* never signifies oracles in Homer: for in the hymn to Apollo, (and Thucydides quotes that hymn as Homer's) the poet thus uses it,

— — — ἀγγέλλωσι θέμιστας
φοίβε Ἀπόλλωνος —

Strabo himself uses *Θεμιστείαν* in this sense, lib. xvii. and in the oracles that are yet extant, *Θεμιστεύειν* frequently signifies *oracula reddere*: and in Ælian (continues the scholiast) lib. iii. chap. 43, 44. εἰ σὲ θεμιστεύσω, signifies *non tibi oracula reddam*; and Hesychius renders *Θέμιστες*, by *μαντεῖα*, *χρήσμοι*, prophecy or oracles.

Then Medon, conscious of their dire debates,
The murd'rous council to the queen relates.

v. 426. —— *Medon, conscious of their dire debates.*] After this verse Eustathius recites one that is omitted in most of the late editions as spurious, at least improper.

Αὐλῆς ἐκτὸς ἔων, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθε μῆτιν ὕφαινον.

That is, Medon was out of the court, whereas the suitors formed their council within it : the line is really to be suspected ; for a little above, Homer directly tells us, that the suitors left the palace.

Then issuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sat.

It is likewise very evident that they stood in the open air, for they discover the ship returning from the ambush, and sailing into the bay. How then can it be said of the suitors, that they formed their assembly in the court, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθε μῆτιν ὕφαινον. Besides, continues Dacier, they left the palace, and placed themselves under the lofty wall of it.

Ἐκ δ' ἦλθον μεγάρῳ, παρὰ κ' μέγα τειχίον αὐλῆς.

How then is it possible to see the ship entering the port, when this wall must necessarily obstruct the sight : the two verses therefore evidently contradict themselves, and one of them must consequently be rejected : she would have the line read thus ;

Αὐλῆς ἐνθὸς ἔων, οἱ δ' ἔκλιθε, &c.

But all the difficulty vanishes by taking αὐλῆ, as it is frequently used, to denote any place open to the air, and consequently not the court, but the court-yard, and this is the proper signification of the word. Then Medon may stand on the outside of the wall of the court-yard, αὐλῆς ἐκτὸς and over-hear the debates of the suitors who

Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends :
 Her hafty steps a damfel-train attends. 429

Full where the dome its fhining valves expands,
 Sudden before the rival pow'rs she ftands :
 And veiling decent with a modeft fhade
 Her cheek, indignant to Antinous faid :

O void of faith ! of all bad men the worft !
 Renown'd for wifdom, by th' abufe accurs'd ! 435
 Miftaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind !
 Thy deeds denote thee of the bafeft kind.

Wretch ! to deftroy a prince that friendship gives,
 While in his gueft his murd'rer he receives :
 Nor dread fuperior Jove, to whom belong 440

The caufe of fuppliants, and revenge of wrong.
 Haft thou forgot, (ingrateful as thou art)

Who fav'd thy father with a friendly part ?
 Lawlefs he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs
 The Taphyan pirates on Thefprotia's fhores ; 445
 Enrag'd, his life, his treasures they demand ;
 Ulyffes fav'd him from th' avenger's hand.

form their council within it, or ἐνδοθε μῆτιν ἔφαινον. And as for the wall intercepting the view of the fuitors, this is merely conjecture ; and it is more rational to imagine that the court-yard was open fea-ward, that fo beautiful a profpect as the ocean might not be fhut up from the palace of a king ; or at leaft, the palace might ftand upon fuch an eminence as to command the ocean.

v. 447. — — *From th' avenger's hand.*] This whole paffage is thus underftood by Eufthathius ; By δὴεῖον ἐποδδείσας Homer means the Ithacans ; and he likewise affirms that

And would'st thou evil for his good repay?
 His bed dishonour and his house betray? 449
 Afflict his queen? and with a murd'rous hand
 Destroy his heir?—but cease, 'tis I command.
 Far hence those fears, (Eurymachus reply'd)
 O prudent princess! bid thy soul confide.

the people who demanded vengeance of Ulysses were also the Ithacans. It is not here translated in this sense; the construction rather requires it to be understood of the Theſprotians, who were allies of Ulysses, and by virtue of that alliance demanded Eupithes, the father of Antinous, out of the hands of Ulysses. But I submit to the reader's judgment.

v. 449. *His bed dishonour, and his house betray?
 Afflict his queen? &c.]*

It is observable, that Penelope in the compass of two lines recites four heads of her complaint; such contractions of thought and expression being natural to persons in anger, as Eustathius observes; she speaks with heat, and consequently starts from thought to thought with precipitation. The whole speech is animated with a generous resentment, and she concludes at once like a mother and a queen; like a mother, with affection for Telemachus; and like a queen with authority, *πάντασθαι κέλομαι.*

v. 452. (— — *Eurymachus reply'd.*) This whole discourse of Eurymachus is to be understood by way of contrariety: there is an obvious and a latent interpretation; for instance, when he says,

His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear;
 it obviously means the blood of the person who offers violence to Telemachus; but it may likewise mean the blood

Breathes there a man who dares that hero slay,
 While I behold the golden light of day? 455
 No : by the righteous Pow'rs of heav'n I swear,
 His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.
 Ulysses, when my infant days I led,
 With wine suffic'd me, and with dainties fed :
 My gen'rous soul abhors th' ungrateful part, 460
 And my friend's son lives dearest to my heart.
 Then fear no mortal arm ; if Heav'n destroy,
 We must resign : for man is born to die.

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir'd :
 Then sorrowing, with sad step the queen retir'd,
 With streaming eyes all comfortless deplor'd, 466
 Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her lord ;

of Telemachus, and the construction admits both interpretations : thus also when he says, that no person shall lay hands upon Telemachus, while he is alive, he means that he will do it himself : and lastly, when he adds,

Then fear no mortal arm : if heav'n destroy,
 We must resign ; for man is born to die.

the apparent signification is, that Telemachus has occasion only to fear a natural death ; but he means if the oracle of Jupiter commands them to destroy Telemachus, that then the suitors will take away his life. He alludes to the foregoing speech of Amphinomus :

Consult we first th' all-seeing Pow'rs above,
 And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.
 If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies ;
 If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

Eustathius,

Nor ceas'd, till Pallas bid her sorrows fly,
And in soft slumber seal'd her flowing eye.

And now Eumæus, at the ev'ning hour, 470
Came late returning to his silvan bow'r.

Ulysses and his son had drest with art
A yearly boar, and gave the Gods their part,
Holy repast! That instant from the skies
The martial Goddess to Ulysses flies: 475

She waves her golden wand, and re-assumes
From ev'ry feature every grace that blooms;
At once his vestures change; at once she sheds
Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads.
Left to the queen the swain with transport fly, 480
Unable to contain th' unruly joy.

When near he drew, the prince breaks forth;
 proclaim
What tidings, friends? what speaks the voice of
 fame?

Say, if the suitors measure back the main,
Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain? 485

Whether, he cries, they measure back the flood,
Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,
Escap'd my care: where lawless suitors sway,
Thy mandate born, my soul disdain'd to stay.
But from th' Hermæan height I cast a view, 490
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew;

v. 490. *From th' Hermæan height* — —] It would be superfluous to translate all the various interpretations of this passage; it will be sufficiently intelligible to the reader?

Her freight a shining band: with martial air
 Each pois'd his shield, and each advanc'd his spear:

if he looks upon it only to imply that there was an hill in Ithaca called the Hermæan hill, either because there was a temple, statue, or altar of Mercury upon it; and so called from that Deity.

It has been written that Mercury being the messenger of the Gods, in his frequent journeys cleared the roads, and when he found any stones he threw them in an heap out of the way, and these heaps were called ἑρμαῖοι, or *mercuries*. The circumstance of his clearing the roads is somewhat odd; but why might not Mercury as well as Trivia preside over them; and have his images erected in publick ways, because he was supposed to frequent them as the messenger of the Gods?

This book takes up no more time than the space of the thirty-eighth day; for Telemachus reaches the lodge of Eumæus in the morning; a little after he dispatches Eumæus to Penelope, who returns in the evening of the same day. The book in general is very beautiful in the original; the discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus is particularly tender and affecting: it has some resemblance with that of Joseph's discovery of himself to his brethren, and it may not perhaps be disagreeable to see how two such authors describe the same passion,

I am Joseph, I am your brother Joseph.

I am Ulysses, I, my son! am he!

and he wept aloud, and he fell on his brother's neck and wept.

He wept abundant, and he wept aloud.

But it must be owned that Homer falls infinitely short of Moses: he must be a very wicked man, that can read the history of Joseph without the utmost touches of compassion and transport. There is a majestick simplicity in

And if aright these searching eyes survey,
 Th' eluded suitors stem the wat'ry way. 495

The prince, well pleas'd to disappoint their wiles,
 Steals on his fire a glance, and secret smiles.
 And now a short repast prepar'd, they feed,
 'Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled:
 Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay, 500
 And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.

the whole relation, and such an affecting portrait of human nature, that it overwhelms us with vicissitudes of joy and sorrow. This is a pregnant instance how much the best of heathen writers is inferiour to the divine historian upon a parallel subject, where the two authors endeavour to move the softer passions. The same may with equal truth be said in respect to sublimity; not only in the instance produced by Longinus, viz. *Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be made, and the earth was made*: but in general, in the more elevated parts of Scripture, and particularly the whole book of Job; which, with regard both to sublimity of thought, and morality, exceeds beyond all comparison the most noble parts of Homer.

THE
SEVENTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

THE
A R G U M E N T.

TELEMACHUS returning to the city, relates to *Penelope* the sum of his travels. *Ulysses* is conducted by *Eumæus* to the palace, where his old dog *Argus* acknowledges his master, after an absence of twenty years, and dies with joy. *Eumæus* returns into the country, and *Ulysses* remains among the suitors, whose behaviour is described.

THE
SEVENTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

SOON as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Sprinkled with roseate light the dewy lawn ;
In haste the prince arose, prepar'd to part ;
His hand impatient grasps the pointed dart ;
Fair on his feet the polish'd sandals shine, S
And thus he greets the master of the swine.

My friend adieu ; let this short stay suffice ;
I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes, }
And end her tears, her sorrows, and her sighs.

v. 8. *I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes.*] There are two reasons for the return of Telemachus : one, the duty a son owes to a mother ; the other, to find an opportunity to put in execution the designs concerted with Ulysses : the poet therefore shifts the scene from the lodge to the palace. Telemachus takes not Ulysses along with him, for fear he should raise suspicion in the suitors, that a person in a beggar's garb has some secret merit, to obtain the familiarity of a king's son, and this might be an

But thou attentive, what we order heed ; 10
 This hapless stranger to the city lead ;
 By publick bounty let him there be fed,
 And bless the hand that stretches forth the bread.
 To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,
 My will may covet, but my pow'r denies. 15

occasion of a discovery ; whereas when Ulysses afterwards appears amongst the suitors, he is thought to be an entire stranger to Telemachus, which prevents all jealousy and gives them an opportunity to carry on their measures, without any particular observation. Besides, Eumæus is still to be kept in ignorance concerning the person of Ulysses ; Telemachus therefore gives him a plausible reason for his return ; namely, that his mother may no longer be in pain for his safety : this likewise excellently contributes to deceive Eumæus. Now as the presence of Ulysses in the palace is absolutely necessary to bring about the suitors destruction, Telemachus orders Eumæus to conduct him thither, and by this method he comes as the friend and guest of Eumæus, not of Telemachus : moreover, this injunction was necessary : Eumæus was a person of such generosity, that he would have thought himself obliged to detain his guest under his own care and inspection : nay, before he guides him towards the palace, in the sequel of this book, he tells Ulysses he does it solely in compliance with the order of Telemachus, and acts contrary to his own inclinations.

v. 14. *To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,
 My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.]*

This might appear too free a declaration, if Telemachus had made it before he knew Ulysses ; for no circumstance could justify him for using any disregard toward the poor and stranger, according to the strict notions, and the sanctity of the laws of hospitality amongst

If this raise anger in the stranger's thought,
The pain of anger punishes the fault :

The very truth I undisguis'd declare ;

For what so easy as to be sincere ?

To this Ulysses. What the prince requires 20
Of swift removal, seconds my desires.

To want like mine the peopled town can yield

More hopes of comfort than the lonely field.

Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,

Or stoop to tasks a rural lord demands. 25

Adieu ! but since this ragged garb can bear

So ill, th' inclemencies of morning air,

A few hours space permit me here to stay ;

My steps Eumæus shall to town convey ;

With riper beams when Phœbus warms the day. } 30

Thus he : nor ought Telemachus reply'd, 31

But left the mansion with a lofty stride :

Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breast elate,

Revolving deep the suitors sudden fate.

Arriving now before th' imperial hall ; 35

He props his spear against the pillar'd wall ;

the antients: but as the case stands, we are not in the least shocked at the words of Telemachus; we know the reason why he thus speaks; it is to conceal Ulysses. He is so far from shewing any particular regard to him, that he treats him with a severity in some degree contrary to the laws of hospitality; by adding, that if he complains of this hard usage, the complaint will not redress but increase his calamity.

Then like a lion o'er the threshold bounds ;
 The marble pavement with his step resounds ;
 His eye first glanc'd where Euryclea spreads
 With furry spoils of beasts the splendid beds : 40
 She saw, she wept, she ran with eager pace,
 And reach'd her master with a long embrace:
 All crowded round the family appears
 With wild entrancement, and estatick tears.
 Swift from above descends the royal fair ; 45
 (Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,
 Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air) }

v. 46. (*Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,
 Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air*)]

This description presents us with a noble idea of the beauty and chastity of Penelope ; her *person resembles Venus, but Venus with the modest air of Diana*. Dionysius Halicarn. takes notice of the beauty and softness of these two verses.

Ἡ δ' ἔεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περιφρωγὴν Πηνελόπειαν
 Ἀρτέμιδε ἰκέλη, ἣ δὲ χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτην.

When Homer (remarks that author) paints a beautiful face, or an engaging object, he chuses the softest vowels, and most smooth and flowing semivowels : he never clogs the pronunciation with rough sounds, and a collision of untunable consonants, but every syllable, every letter conspires to exhibit the beauty of the object he endeavours to represent : there are no less than three and thirty vowels in two lines, and no more than twenty-nine consonants, which makes the verses flow away with an agreeable smoothness and harmony.

Hangs o'er her son ; in his embraces dies ;
 Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes :
 Few words she spoke, tho' much she had to say,
 And scarce those few, for tears, could force their
 way. 51

Light of my eyes ! he comes ! unhop'd-for joy !
 Has Heav'n from Pylos brought my lovely boy ?
 So snatch'd from all our cares !—Tell, hast thou
 known

Thy father's fate, and tell me all thy own. 55

Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind !
 Cease with those tears to melt a manly mind,
 (Reply'd the prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,
 From death and treason to thy arms restor'd. 59
 Go bathe, and rob'd in white, ascend the tow'rs ;
 With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal Pow'rs ;

Penelope, we see, embraces her son with the utmost affection : *kissing the lip* was not in fashion in the days of Homer ; *No one* (remarks the bishop) *ever kisses the lip or mouth*. Penelope here kisses her son's eyes, and his head ; that is, his cheek, or perhaps forehead ; and Eumæus, in the preceding book, embraces the hands, eyes, and head of Telemachus. But for the comfort of the ladies, I rejoice to observe that all these were ceremonious kisses from a mother to a son, or from an inferiour to a superiour : this therefore is no argument that lovers thus embraced, nor ought it to be brought as a reason why the present manner of salutation should be abrogated. Madam Dacier has been so tender as to keep it a secret from the men, that there ever was a time in which the modern method of kissing was not in fashion : she highly deserves their thanks and gratitude for it.

To ev'ry God vow hecatombs to bleed,
 And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed.
 While to th' assembled council I repair ;
 A stranger sent by Heav'n attends me there ; 65
 My new accepted guest I haste to find,
 Now to Piræus' honour'd charge consign'd.

The matron heard, nor was his word in vain.
 She bath'd ; and rob'd in white, with all her train,
 To every God vow'd hecatombs to bleed, 70
 And call'd Jove's vengeance on the guilty deed.
 Arm'd with his lance the prince then pass'd the gate ;
 Two dogs behind, a faithful guard, await ;

v. 65. *A stranger sent by Heav'n attends me there.*] There is a vein of sincere piety that runs through the words and actions of Telemachus : he has no sooner delivered his mother from her uneasy apprehensions concerning his safety, but he proceeds to another act of virtue toward Theoclymenus, whom he had taken into his protection : he performs his duty towards men and towards the Gods. It is by his direction that Penelope offers up her devotions for success, and thanks for his return. It is he who prescribes the manner of it ; namely, by washing the hands, in token of the purity of mind required by those who supplicate the Deities ; and by putting on clean garments, to shew the reverence and regard with which their souls ought to be possess'd when they appear before the Gods. I am not sensible that the last ceremony is often mentioned in other parts of Homer ; yet I doubt not but it was practis'd upon all religious solemnities. The moral of the whole is, that piety is a sure way to victory : Telemachus appears every where a good man, and for this reason he becomes at last an happy one ; and his calamities contribute to his glory.

Pallas his form with grace divine improves :
 The gazing croud admires him as he moves : 75
 Him, gath'ring round, the haughty suitors greet
 With semblance fair, but inward deep deceit.
 Their false addresses gen'rous he deny'd,
 Past on, and sat by faithful Mentor's side ;
 With Antiphus, and Halitherfes sage, 80
 (His father's counsellours, rever'd for age.)
 Of his own fortunes, and Ulysses' fame,
 Much ask'd the seniors ; 'till Piræus came.
 The stranger-guest pursu'd him close behind ;
 Whom when Telemachus beheld, he join'd. 85
 He, (when Piræus ask'd for slaves to bring
 The gifts and treasures of the Spartan king)
 Thus thoughtful answer'd: Those we shall not
 move,
 Dark and unconscious of the will of Jove :
 We know not yet the full event of all : 90
 Stabb'd in his palace if your prince must fall,
 Us, and our house if treason must o'erthrow,
 Better a friend possess them, than a foe ;
 If death to these, and vengeance Heav'n decree,
 Riches are welcome then, not else, to me. 95
 'Till then, retain the gifts. — The hero said,
 And in his hand the willing stranger led.
 Then dis-array'd, the shining bath they sought,
 (With unguents smooth) of polisht marble wrought ;
 Obedient handmaids with assistant toil 100
 Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil :

Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,
 And fresh from bathing to their seats withdrew.
 The golden ew'r a nymph attendant brings,
 Replenish'd from the pure translucent springs; 105
 With copious streams that golden ew'r supplies
 A silver laver of capacious size.
 They wash : the table, in fair order spread,
 Is pil'd with viands and the strength of bread.
 Full opposite, before the folding gate, 110
 The pensive mother sits in humble state ;
 Lowly she sat, and with dejected view
 The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.

v. 117. *Say, to my mournful couch, &c.*] Penelope had requested Telemachus to give her an account of his voyage to Pyle, and of what he had heard concerning Ulysses. He there waved the discourse, because the queen was in publick with her female attendants : by this conduct the poet sustains both their characters ; Penelope is impatient to hear of Ulysses ; and this agrees with the affection of a tender wife ; but the discovery being unreasonable, Telemachus forbears to satisfy her curiosity ; in which he acts like a wise man. Here, (observes Eustathius) she gently reproaches him for not satisfying her impatience concerning her husband ; she insinuates that it is a piece of cruelty to permit her still to grieve, when it is in his power to give her comfort ; and this induces him to gratify her desires. It ought to be observed, that Homer chuses a proper time for this relation ; it was necessary that the suitors should be ignorant of the story of Ulysses ; Telemachus therefore makes it when they are withdrawn to their sports, and when none were present but friends

The prince and stranger shar'd the genial feast,
 'Till now the rage of thirst and hunger ceast. 115

When thus the queen. My son! my only
 friend!

Say, to my mournful couch shall I ascend?
 (The couch deserted now a length of years;
 The couch for ever water'd with my tears)
 Say wilt thou not (ere yet the suitor-crew 120

Return, and riot shakes our walls anew)

Say wilt thou not the least account afford?

The least glad tidings of my absent lord?

To her the youth. We reach'd the Pylian plains,
 Where Nestor, shepherd of his people, reigns. 125

All arts of tenderness to him are known,

Kind to Ulysses' race as to his own;

No father with a fonder grasp of joy,

Strains to his bosom his long-absent boy.

But all unknown, if yet Ulysses breathe, 130

Or glide a spectre in the realms beneath;

v. 134. *There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms,
 (So Heav'n decreed) &c.]*

Eustathius takes notice of the candid behaviour of Telemachus, with respect to Helen: she had received him courteously, and he testifies his gratitude, by ascribing the calamities she drew upon her country to the decree of Heaven, not to her immodesty: this is particularly decent in the mouth of Telemachus, because he is now acquainted with his father's return; otherwise he could not have mentioned her name but to her dishonour, who had been the occasion of his death.

For further search, his rapid steeds transport
 My lengthen'd journey to the Spartan court.
 There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms
 (So Heav'n decreed) engag'd the great in arms.
 My cause of coming told, he thus rejoin'd; 136
 And still his words live perfect in my mind.

Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train
 An absent hero's nuptial joys profane!
 So with her young, amid the woodland shades,
 A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades, 141
 Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,
 And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;
 Meantime returning, with remorseless sway
 The monarch savage rends the panting prey: 145
 With equal fury, and with equal fame,
 Shall great Ulysses re-assert his claim.
 O Jove! Supreme! whom men and Gods revere;
 And thou whose lustre gilds the rolling sphere!

v. 138. *Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train &c.*] These verses are repeated from the fourth *Odyssey*; and are not without a good effect; they cannot fail of comforting Penelope, by assuring her that Ulysses is alive, and restrained by Calypso involuntarily; they give her hopes of his return, and the satisfaction of hearing his glory from the mouth of Menelaus. The conciseness of Telemachus is likewise remarkable; he recapitulates in thirty-eight lines the subject of almost three books, the third, the fourth, and fifth: he selects every circumstance that can please Penelope, and drops those that would give her pain.

With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid 150
 The chief adopted by the martial Maid !
 Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,
 As when, contending on the Lesbian shore,
 His prowess Philomelides confess,
 And loud acclaiming Greeks the victor blest: 155
 Then soon th' invaders of his bed, and throne,
 Their love presumptuous shall by death atone.
 Now what you question of my antient friend,
 With truth I answer ; thou the truth attend.
 Learn what I heard the * sea-born seer relate,
 Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate. 161
 Sole in an isle, imprison'd by the main,
 The sad survivor of his num'rous train,
 Ulysses lies ; detain'd by magick charms,
 And prest unwilling in Calypso's arms. 165
 No sailors there, no vessels to convey,
 Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way——
 This told Atrides, and he told no more.
 Thence safe I voyag'd to my native shore.

He ceas'd ; nor made the pensive queen reply,
 But droop'd her head, and drew a secret sigh. 171
 When Theoclymenus the seer began :
 Oh suff'ring consort of the suff'ring man !

v. 172. *When Theoclymenus the seer began: &c*] It is with great judgment that the poet here introduces Theoclymenus ; he is a person that has no direct relation to the story of the Odyssey, yet because he appears accidentally in it, Homer unites him very artificially with it, that

* Proteus.

What human knowledge could, those kings might
tell;

But I the secrets of high Heav'n reveal. 175

Before the first of Gods be this declar'd,

Before the board whose blessings we have shar'd ;

Witness the genial rites, and witness all

This house holds sacred in her ample wall !

he may not appear to no purpose, and as an useless ornament. He here speaks as an augur, and what he utters contributes to the perseverance of Penelope in resisting the addresses of the suitors, by assuring her of the return of Ulysses ; and consequently in some degree Theoclymenus promotes the principal action. But it may be said, if it was necessary that Penelope should be informed of his return, why does not Telemachus assure her of it, who was fully acquainted with the truth ? The answer is, that Penelope is not to be fully informed, but only encouraged by a general hope : Theoclymenus speaks from his art, which may possibly be liable to error : but Telemachus must have spoken from knowledge, which would have been contrary to the injunctions of Ulysses, and might have proved fatal by an unseasonable discovery : it was therefore judicious in the poet to put the assurance of the return of Ulysses into the mouth of Theoclymenus, and not of Telemachus.

There is an expression in this speech, which in the Greek is remarkable : literally it is to be rendered, *Ulysses is now sitting or creeping in Ithaca*, ἤμεν ἢ ἐρπῶν ; that is, Ulysses is returned and concealed : it is taken from the posture of a person in the act of endeavouring to hide himself : he sits down or creeps upon the ground. Eustathius explains it by κρύφα, καὶ ἢ κατ' ἔρθον βαδίζων.

Ev'n now this instant, great Ulyffes lay'd 180

At rest, or wand'ring in his country's shade,

Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view

Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.

Of this sure auguries the Gods bestow'd,

When first our vessel anchor'd in your road. 185

Succeed those omens, Heav'n! (the queen re-
join'd)

So shall our bounties speak a grateful mind;

And ev'ry envy'd happiness attend

The man, who calls Penelope his friend.

Thus commun'd they: while in the marble
court 190

(Scene of their insolence) the lords resort;

Athwart the spacious square each tries his art

To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.

v. 192. — — — *each tries his art*

To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.]

Eustathius remarks that though the suitors were abandoned to luxury, vice, and intemperance, yet they exercise themselves in laudable sports: they toss the quoit, and throw the javelin, which are both heroick diversions, and form the body into strength and activity. This is owing to the virtue of the age, not the persons: such sports were fashionable, and therefore used by the suitors, and not because they were heroick. However they may instruct us never to give ourselves up to idleness and inaction; but to make our very diversions subservient to nobler views, and turn a pleasure into a virtue.

Now did the hour of sweet repast arrive, 194
 And from the field the victim flocks they drive:
 Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them best,
 And honour'd with a portion of their feast)
 To bid the banquet, interrupts their play.
 Swift to the hall they haste; aside they lay
 Their garments, and succinct, the victims flay. }
 Then sheep and goats, and bristly porkers bled, 201
 And the proud steer was o'er the marble spread.

While thus the copious banquet they provide;
 Along the road conversing side by side,
 Proceed Ulysses and the faithful swain: 205
 When thus Eumæus, gen'rous and humane.

To town, observant of our lord's behest,
 Now let us speed; my friend, no more my guest!

v. 196. *Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them best.)* We may observe that the character of Medon is very particular; he is at the same time a favourite of the suitors, and Telemachus, persons entirely opposite in their interest. It seldom happens any man can please two parties, without acting an insincere part: Atticus was indeed equally acceptable to the two factions of Cæsar and Pompey, but it was because he seem'd neutral, and acted as if they were both his friends; or rather he was a man of such eminent virtues, that they esteem'd it an honour to have him thought their friend. Homer every where represents Medon as a person of integrity; he is artful, but not criminal: no doubt but he made all compliances, that consist'd with probity, with the suitors dispositions; by this method he sav'd Penelope more effectually than if he had shew'd a more rigid virtue. He made himself

Yet like myself I wish'd thee here preferr'd,
 Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd. 210
 But much to raise my master's wrath I fear ;
 The wrath of princes ever is severe.
 Then heed his will, and be our journey made
 While the broad beams of Phœbus are display'd,
 Or ere brown ev'ning spreads her chilly shade. }

master of their hearts by an insinuating behaviour, and was a spy upon their actions. Eustathius compares him to a buskin that fits both legs, *ὅσων τις κόθρον*; he seems to have been an Anti-Cato, and practis'd a virtuous gaiety.

v. 210. *Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.*] Such little traits as these are very delightful; for the reader knowing that the person to whom this offer is made, is Ulysses, cannot fail of being diverted to see the honest and loyal Eumæus promising to make his master and king the keeper of his herds or stalls, *εαθμῶν*; and this is offered as a piece of good fortune or dignity.

v. 215. — — — *ere ev'ning spreads her chilly shade.*] Eustathius gathers from these words, that the time of the action of the Odyssey was in the end of autumn, or beginning of winter, when the mornings and evenings are cold: thus Ulysses, in the beginning of this book, makes the coldness of the morning an excuse for not going with Telemachus: his rags being but an ill defence against it; and here Eumæus mentions the coldness of the evening, as a reason why they should begin their journey in the heat of the day; so that it was now probably about ten of the clock, and they arrive at Ithaca at noon: from hence we may conjecture, that the lodge of Eumæus was five or six miles from the city: that is, about a two hours walk.

Just thy advice, (the prudent chief rejoin'd) 216
 And such as suits the dictate of my mind.
 Lead on: but help me to some staff to stay
 My feeble step, since rugged is the way.

Across his shoulders, then the scrip he flung, 220
 Wide-patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong.
 A staff Eumæus gave. Along the way
 Cheerly they fare: behind, the keepers stay;
 These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)
 Supply his absence, and attend the herd. 225
 And now his city strikes the monarch's eyes,
 Alas! how chang'd! a man of miseries;

v. 224. *These, with their watchful dogs* ← —] It is certain that if these little particulars had been omitted, there would have been no chasm in the connexion; why then does Homer insert such circumstances unnecessarily, which it must be allowed are of no importance, and add nothing to the perfection of the story? nay, they are such as may be thought trivial, and unworthy the dignity of epick poetry. But, as Dacier very well observes, they are a kind of painting: were a painter to draw this subject, he would undoubtedly insert into the piece these herdsmen and dogs after the manner of Homer; they are natural ornaments, and consequently are no disgrace either to the poet or the painter.

It is observable that Homer gives us an exact draught of the country: he sets before us as in a picture, the city, the circular grove of poplars adjacent, the fountain falling from a rock, and the altar sacred to the Nymphs, erected on the point of it. We are as it were transported into Ithaca, and travel with Ulysses and Eumæus: Homer verifies the observation of Horace above all poets; namely, that poetry is painting.

Propt on a staff, a beggar old and bare,
 In rags dishonest flutt'ring with the air!
 Now pass'd the rugged road, they journey down
 The cavern'd way descending to the town, 231
 Where, from the rock, with liquid lapse distills
 A limpid fount ; that spread in parting rills
 Its current thence to serve the city brings:
 An useful work ! adorn'd by antient kings. 235
 Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there
 In sculptur'd stone immortaliz'd their care,
 In marble urns receiv'd it from above,
 And shaded with a green surrounding grove ;
 Where silver alders, in high arches twin'd, 240
 Drink the cold stream, and tremble to the wind.
 Beneath, sequester'd to the Nymphs, is seen
 A mossy altar, deep embower'd in green ;
 Where constant vows by travellers are paid,
 And holy horrors solemnize the shade. 245
 Here with his goats, (not vow'd to sacred flame,
 But pamper'd luxury) Melanthius came :

v. 236. *Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor* — —] Publick benefactions demand publick honours and acknowledgments; for this reason Homer makes an honourable mention of these three brothers. Ithaca was a small island, and destitute of plenty of fresh water; this fountain therefore was a publick good to the whole region about it; and has given immortality to the authors of it. They were the sons of Pterelaus (as Eustathius informs us); Ithacus gave name to the country, Neritus to a mountain, and Polyc-tor to a place called Polyctorium.

Two grooms attend him. With an envious look
He ey'd the stranger, and imperious spoke.

The good old proverb how this pair fulfil! 250
One rogue is usher to another still.

Heav'n with a secret principle indu'd
Mankind, to seek their own similitude.

Where goes the swine-herd with that ill-look'd
guest?

That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feast! 255

Full many a post have those broad shoulders worn,
From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with scorn;
To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,
'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.

v. 258. *To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,
'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.]*

Dacier is very singular in her interpretation of this passage: she imagines it has a reference to the games practised amongst the suitors, and to the rewards of the victors, which were usually tripods and beautiful captives. "Thinkest thou (says Melanthius) that this beggar will obtain the victory in our sports, and that they will give him as the reward of his valour some beautiful slave, or some precious tripod?" But in Homer there is nothing that gives the least countenance to this explication: he thus literally speaks: *this fellow by going from door to door will meet with correction, while he begs meanly for a few scraps, not for things of price, such as a captive or tripod.* Eustathius explains it as spoken in contempt of Ulysses; that he appears to be such a vile person, as to have no ambition or hope to expect any thing better than a few scraps, nor to aspire to the rewards of nobler strangers, such as captives or tripods. *Ακολοι*, says the same author,

To beg, than work, he better understands ; 260
 Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.
 For any office could the slave be good,
 To cleanse the fold, or help the kids to food,

are the minutest crumbs of bread, *Σμικρότατοι ψωμοί*. I am persuaded, that the reader will subscribe to the judgment of Eustathius, if he considers the construction, and that *ἄορας* and *λέβητας* are govern'd by *αἰτίζων* as effectually as *ἀκόλες*, and therefore must refer to the same act of begging, not of claiming by victory in the games: *αἰτίζων* is not a word that can here express a reward, but only a charity: besides, would it not be absurd to say that a beggar goes from door to door asking alms, and not rewards bestowed upon victors in publick exercises? the words *πολλῆσι φλιῆσι* make the sense general, they denote the life of a beggar, which is to go from door to door, and consequently they ought not to be confined solely to the suitors; and if not, they can have no reference to any games, or to any rewards bestowed upon such occasions. Besides, it is scarce to be conceived that Melanthius could think this beggar capable of being admitted into the company, much less into the diversion of the suitors, who were all persons of high birth and station. It is true, lib. xxi. Ulysses is permitted to try the bow, but this is through the peculiar grace of Telemachus, who knew the beggar to be Ulysses; and entirely contrary to their injunctions.

From this passage we may correct an error in Hesychius: *ἄορας* (says he) are *γυναῖκες ἢ τρίποδες*: the sentence is evidently maimed, for Hesychius undoubtedly thus wrote it, *ἄορας γυναῖκες λέγονται*, for thus (adds he) Homer uses it:

— — — *ἐκ ἄορας ἐδὲ λέβητας.*

That is. (says Hesychius) *ἐκ γυναῖκας, ἐδὲ τρίποδες*, referring to this verse of the Odyssey.

If any labour those big joints could learn ; 264

Some whey, to wash his bowels, he might earn.

To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to spread,

Is all, by which that graceless maw is fed.

Yet hear me ! if thy impudence but dare

Approach yon' walls, I prophesy thy fare:

Dearly, full dearly shalt thou buy thy bread 270

With many a footstool thund'ring at thy head.

He thus: nor insolent of word alone,

Spurn'd with his rustick heel his king unknown ;

Spurn'd, but not mov'd: he, like a pillar stood,

Nor stirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road:

Doubtful, or with his staff to strike him dead, 276

Or greet the pavement with his worthless head.

Short was that doubt ; to quell his rage inur'd,

The hero stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.

v. 279. *The hero stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.*] Homer excellently sustains the character of Ulysses ; he is a man of patience, and master of all his passions ; he is here misused by one of his own servants, yet is so far from returning the injury, that he stifles the sense of it, without speaking one word : it is true he is described as having a conflict in his soul ; but this is no derogation to his character : not to feel like a man is insensibility, not virtue ; but to repress the motions of the heart, and keep them within the bounds of moderation, this argues wisdom, and turns an injury into a virtue and glory. There is an excellent contrast between the benevolent Eumæus and the insolent Melanthius. Eumæus resents the outrage of Melanthius more than Ulysses ; he is moved with indignation, but how does he express it? not by railing, but by an appeal to Heaven in a prayer : a conduct worthy

But hateful of the wretch, Eumæus heav'd 280

His hands obtesting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.

Daughters of Jove! who from th' ætherial bow'rs

Descend to swell the springs, and feed the flow'rs!

Nymphs of this fountain! to whose sacred names

Our rural victims mount in blazing flames! 285

To whom Ulysses' piety preferr'd

The yearly firstlings of his flock, and herd;

Succeed my wish; your votary restore:

Oh be some God his convoy to our shore!

Due pains shall punish then this slave's offence,

And humble all his airs of insolence, 291

Who proudly stalking, leaves the herds at large,

Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.

What mutters he? (Melanthius sharp rejoins)

This crafty miscreant big with dark designs? 295

The day shall come; nay, 'tis already near,

When, slave! to sell thee at a price too dear,

Must be my care; and hence transport thee o'er,

(A load and scandal to this happy shore.)

to be imitated in more enlightened ages. The word *ἀγλαίας* here bears a peculiar signification; it does not imply voluptuousness as usually, but pride, and means that Ulysses would spoil his haughty airs, if he should ever return: this interpretation agrees with what follows, where Eumæus reproaches him for despising his rural charge, and aspiring to politeness, or, as we express it, to be a man of the town.

Oh ! that as surely great Apollo's dart, 300
 Or some brave sutor's sword, might pierce the
 heart

Of the proud son ; as that we stand this hour
 In lasting safety from the father's pow'r.

So spoke the wretch, but shunning farther fray,
 Turn'd his proud step, and left them on their
 way. 305

Straight to the feastful palace he repair'd,
 Familiar enter'd, and the banquet shar'd ;
 Beneath Eurymachus, his patron lord,
 He took his place, and plenty heap'd the board.

Meantime they heard, soft-circling in the sky,
 Sweet airs ascend, and heav'nly minstrelsie ; 311
 (For Phemius to the lyre attun'd the strain :)
 Ulysses hearken'd, then address'd the swain.

Well may this palace admiration claim,
 Great, and respondent to the master's fame ! 315

v. 308. *Beneath Eurymachus — He took his place, —*] We may gather from hence the truth of an observation formerly made, That Melanthius, Eumæus, &c. were persons of distinction, and their offices posts of honour: we see Melanthius, who had the charge of the goats of Ulysses, is a companion for princes.

The reason why Melanthius in particular associates himself with Eurymachus is, an intrigue which that prince holds with Melanthe his sister, as appears from the following book. There is a confederacy and league between them, and we find they all suffer condign punishment in the end of the *Odyssey*.

Stage above stage th' imperial structure stands,
 Holds the chief honours, and the town commands :
 High walls and battlements the courts inclose,
 And the strong gates defy an host of foes.
 Far other cares its dwellers now employ : 320
 The throng'd assembly, and the feast of joy :
 I see the smokes of sacrifice aspire,
 And hear (what graces ev'ry feast) the lyre.

Then thus Eumæus. Judge we which were best ;
 Amidst yon' revellers a sudden guest 325
 Chuse you to mingle, while behind I stay ?
 Or I first ent'ring introduce the way ?
 Wait for a space without, but wait not long ;
 This is the house of violence and wrong :
 Some rude insult thy rev'rend age may bear ; 330
 For like their lawless lords the servants are.

v. 318. *High walls and battlements, &c*] We have here a very particular draught or plan of the palace of Ulysses ; it is a kind of castle, at once designed for strength and magnificence : this we may gather from *ὑπεροπλίσσαιτο*, which Hesychius explains by *ὑπερπηδῆσαι*, *ὑπερβῆναι*, not easily to be surmounted, or forced by arms.

Homer artfully introduces Ulysses struck with wonder at the beauty of the palace ; this is done to confirm Eumæus in the opinion that Ulysses is really the beggar he appears to be, and a perfect stranger among the Ithacans : thus also when he complains of hunger, he speaks the language of a beggar, as Eustathius remarks, to persuade Eumæus that he takes his journey to the court, solely out of want and hunger.

Just is, oh friend! thy caution, and address
 (Reply'd the chief) to no unheedful breast;
 The wrongs and injuries of base mankind
 Fresh to my sense, and always in my mind. 335
 The bravely-patient to no fortune yields:
 On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,
 Storms have I past, and many a stern debate;
 And now in humbler scene submit to Fate.
 What cannot Want? the best she will expose, 340
 And I am learn'd in all her train of woes;
 She fills with navies, hosts, and loud alarms
 The sea, the land, and shakes the world with arms!
 Thus, near the gates conferring as they drew,
 Argus, the dog his antient master knew; 345

v. 345. *Argus, the dog his antient master knew, &c.*] This whole episode has fallen under the ridicule of the critics; Mons. Perault's in particular: "The dunghill before the palace (says that author) is more proper for a peasant than a king; and it is beneath the dignity of poetry to describe the dog Argus almost devoured with vermin." It must be allowed that such a familiar episode could not have been properly introduced into the Iliad: it is writ in a nobler style, and distinguished by a boldness of sentiments and diction; whereas the Odyssey descends to the familiar, and is calculated more for common than heroick life. What Homer says of Argus is very natural, and I do not know any thing more beautiful or more affecting in the whole poem: I dare appeal to every person's judgment, if Argus be not as justly and properly represented, as the noblest figure in it. It is certain that the vermin which Homer mentions would de-

He, not unconscious of the voice, and tread,
 Lifts to the found his ear, and rears his head ;
 Bred by Ulysses, nourished at his board,
 But ah ! not fated long to please his lord !
 To him, his swiftness and his strength were vain ;
 The voice of glory call'd him o'er the main. 351
 'Till then in ev'ry silvan chace renown'd,
 With Argus, Argus, rung the woods around ;
 With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,
 Or trac'd the mazy leveret o'er the lawn. 355
 Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,
 Unhous'd, neglected in the publick way ;
 And where on heaps the rich manure was spread,
 Obscene with reptiles, took his sordid bed.

base our poetry, but in the Greek that very word is noble and sonorous, *Κυνοραϊσέων* : but how is the objection concerning the dunghill to be answered ? We must have recourse to the simplicity of manners amongst the antients, who thought nothing mean that was of use to life. Ithaca was a barren country, full of rocks and mountains, and owed its fertility chiefly to cultivation, and for this reason such circumstantial cares were necessary. It is true such a description now is more proper for a peasant than a king, but antiently it was no disgrace for a king to perform with his own hands, what is now left only to peasants. We read of a dictator taken from the plough, and why may not a king as well manure his field as plough it, without receding from his dignity ? Virgil has put the same thing into a precept :

“Ne saturare fimo pingui pudeat sola.”

He knew his lord ; he knew, and strove to
meet ; 360

In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet ;

Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes

Salute his master, and confess his joys.

Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul ;

Adown his cheek a tear unbidden stole, 365

v. 361. *In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet.*] It may seem that this circumstance was inserted casually, or at least only to shew the age and infirmity of Argus : but there is a further intent in it : if the dog had ran to Ulysses and fawned upon him, it would have raised a strong suspicion in Eumæus that he was not such a stranger to the Ithacans as he pretended, but some person in disguise ; and this might have occasioned an unseasonable discovery.
Eustathius.

v. 364. *Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul.*] I confess myself touched with the tenderness of these tears in Ulysses ; I would willingly think that they proceed from a better principle than the weakness of human nature, and are an instance of a really virtuous, and compassionate disposition.

————— ἀγαθοὶ δ' ἀγιδάκνυες ἄνδρες

Good men are easily moved to tears : in my judgment Ulysses appears more amiable while he weeps over his faithful dog, than when he drives an army of enemies before him : That shews him to be a great hero, This a good man. It was undoubtedly an instance of an excellent disposition in one of the fathers who prayed for the *grace of tears.*

————— “ mollissima corda

“ Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,

“ Quæ lachrymas dedit ; hæc nostri pars optima sensus.”

Juv. Sat. xv.

Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head and dry'd
The drop humane: then thus impassion'd cry'd.

What noble beast in this abandon'd state
Lies here all helpless at Ulysses' gate?
His bulk and beauty speak no vulgar praise; 370
If, as he seems, he *was* in better days,
Some care his age deserves: or was he priz'd
For worthless beauty! therefore now despis'd?
Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of
state, 374

And always cherish'd by their friends, the great.

Not Argus so, (Eumæus thus rejoin'd)
But serv'd a master of a nobler kind,
Who never, never shall behold him more!
Long, long since perish'd on a distant shore!
Oh had you seen him, vig'rous, bold, and young,
Swift as a stag, and as a lion strong; 381

And Dryden,

Each gentle mind the soft infection felt,
For richest metals are most apt to melt.

v. 374. *Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of state,
And always cherish'd by their friends, the great.*]

It is in the Greek *ἄνθρωποι*, or *kings*; but the word is not to be taken in too strict a sense; it implies *all persons of distinction*, or *οἰκονομοί*, like the word *rex* in Horace.

“Regibus hic mos est ubi equos mercantur.”

And *reginæ* in Terence (as Dacier observes) is used in the same manner.

— — “Eunuchum porrò dixti velle te:
“Quia solæ utuntur his reginæ.”

Him no fell savage on the plain withstood,
 None 'scap'd him, bosom'd in the gloomy wood;
 His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,
 To winde the vapour in the tainted dew! 385
 Such, when Ulysses left his natal coast;
 Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is lost!
 The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,
 A sleek and idle race is all their care:
 The master gone, the servants what restrains?
 Or dwells humanity where riot reigns? 391
 Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day
 Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

v. 392. — — — *Whatever day*

Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.]

This is a very remarkable sentence, and commonly found to be true. Longinus, in his enquiry into the decay of human wit, quotes it. "Servitude, be it never so justly
 " established, is a kind of prison, wherein the soul shrinks
 " in some measure, and diminishes by constraint: it has
 " the same effect with the boxes in which dwarfs are in-
 " closed, which not only hinder the body from its
 " growth, but make it less by the constriction. It is ob-
 " servable that all the great orators flourished in repub-
 " licks, and indeed what is there that raises the souls of
 " great men more than liberty? In other governments
 " men commonly become instead of orators, pompous
 " flatterers: a man born in servitude may be capable of
 " other sciences; but no slave can ever be an orator;
 " for while the mind is deprest and broken by slavery,
 " it will never dare to think or say any thing bold and
 " noble; all the vigour evaporates, and it remains as it
 " were confined in a prison." *Etiam fera animalia, si*
clausa teneas, virtutis obliviscuntur. Tacit. Hist. lib. iv.

This said, the honest herdsman strode before :
 The musing monarch pauses at the door : 395
 The dog whom Fate had granted to behold
 His lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,
 Takes a last look, and having seen him, dies ;
 So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes !

These verses are quoted in Plato, lib. vi. *de legibus*, but somewhat differently from our editions.

Ἡμῖσιν γὰρ τε νόε ἀπομείρεται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς ;
 Ἄνδρῶν ἕς ἄν δὴ, &c.

However this aphorism is to be understood only generally, not universally : Eumæus who utters it is an instance to the contrary, who retains his virtue in a state of subjection ; and Plato speaks to the same purpose, asserting that some slaves have been found of such virtue as to be preferred to a son or brother ; and have often preserved their masters and their families.

v. 399. *So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes !*] It has been a question what occasioned the death of Argus, at the instant he saw Ulysses : Eustathius imputes it to the joy he felt at the sight of his master. But there has another objection been started against Homer, for ascribing so long a life as twenty years to Argus, and that dogs never surpass the fifteenth year ; but this is an error ; Aristotle affirms, that some dogs live two and twenty, and other naturalists subscribe to his judgment. Eustathius tells us, that other writers agree, that some dogs live twenty-four years. Pliny thus writes, *Canes Laconici vivunt annis denis, fœminæ duodenis, cœtera genera quindecim annos, aliquando viginti*. Madam Dacier mentions some of her own knowledge that lived twenty-three years ; and the translator, not to fall short of these illustrious examples, has known one that died at twenty-two big with puppies.

And now Telemachus, the first of all, 400
 Observ'd Eumæus ent'ring in the hall ;
 Distant he saw, across the shady dome ;
 Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come :
 There stood an empty seat, where late was plac'd
 In order due, the steward of the feast, 405
 (Who now was busied carving round the board)
 Eumæus took, and plac'd it near his lord.
 Before him instant was the banquet spread,
 And the bright basket pil'd with loaves of bread.

Next came Ulysses, lowly at the door, 410
 A figure despicable, old, and poor,
 In squalid vests with many a gaping rent,
 Propt on a staff, and trembling as he went.
 Then, resting on the threshold of the gate,
 Against a cypress pillar lean'd his weight ; 415
 (Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plain)
 The thoughtful son beheld, and call'd his swain :

These viands, and this bread, Eumæus ! bear,
 And let you' mendicant our plenty share :
 Then let him circle round the suitors board, 420
 And try the bounty of each gracious lord.
 Bold let him ask, encourag'd thus by me ;
 How ill, alas ! do want and shame agree ?

v. 423. *How ill, alas ! do want and shame agree ?*] We are not to imagine that Homer is here recommending immodesty ; but to understand him as speaking of a decent assurance, in opposition to a faulty shame or bashfulness. The verse in the Greek is remarkable.

Αἰδώς δ' ἐν ἀγαθῇ κερχημένῳ ἀνδρὶ περιίλη.

His lord's command the faithful servant bears ;
 The seeming beggar answers with his pray'rs.
 Blest be Telemachus ! in ev'ry deed 426
 Inspire him Jove ! in ev'ry wish succeed !
 This said, the portion from his son convey'd
 With smiles receiving on his scrip he lay'd. 429
 Long as the minstrel swept the sounding wire,
 He fed, and ceas'd when silence held the lyre.
 Soon as the suitors from the banquet rose,
 Minerva prompts the man of mighty woes

A person of great learning has observed that there is a tautology in the three last words ; in *a beggar that wants* : as if the very notion of a beggar did not imply want. Indeed Plato, who cites this verse in his Charmides, uses another word instead of *πρόϊκη*, and inserts *παρεῖναι*. Hesiod likewise, who makes use of the same line, instead of *πρόϊκτη* reads *κομίζει*, which would almost induce us to believe that they thought there was a tautology in Homer. It has therefore been conjectured, that the word *πρόϊκης* should be inserted in the place of *πρόϊκη* ; I am sorry that the construction will not allow it ; that word is of the masculine gender, and *ἀγαθὴ* which of the feminine cannot agree with it. We may indeed substitute *ἀγαθός*, and then the sense will be *bashfulness is no good petitioner for a beggar* ; but this must be done without authority. We must therefore thus understand Homer ; “ Too much modesty is not good for a poor man, who “ lives by begging,” *πρόϊκη* ; and this solution clears the verse from the tautology, for a man may be in want, and not be a beggar ; or (as Homer expresses it) *μεχρημένος*, and yet not *πρόϊκης*.

v. 433. *Minerva prompts, &c.*] This is a circumstance that occurs almost in every book of the Odyssey, and

To tempt their bounties with a suppliant's art,
And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart ;

Pallas has been thought to mean no more than the inherent wisdom of Ulysses, which guides all his actions upon all emergencies: it is not impossible but the poet might intend to insinuate, that the wisdom of man is the gift of heaven, and a blessing from the Gods. But then is it not a derogation to Ulysses, to think nothing but what the Goddess dictates? and a restraint of human liberty, to act solely by the impulse of a Deity? Plutarch in his life of Corneilius excellently solves this difficulty; "Men (observes that author) are ready to censure and despise the poet, as if he destroyed the use of reason, and the freedom of their choice, by continually ascribing every suggestion of heart to the influence of a Goddess: whereas he introduces a Deity not to take away the liberty of the will, but as moving it to act with freedom; the Deity does not work in us the inclinations, but only offers the object to our minds, from whence we conceive the impulse, and form our resolutions." However these influences do not make the action involuntary, but only give a beginning to spontaneous operations; for we must either remove God from all manner of causality, or confess that he invisibly assists us by a secret co-operation. For it is absurd to imagine that the help he lends us, consists in fashioning the postures of the body, or directing the corporeal motions: but in influencing our souls, and exciting the inward faculties into action by secret impulses from above; or, on the contrary, by raising an aversion in the soul, to restrain us from action. It is true in ordinary affairs of life, in matters that are brought about by the ordinary way of reason, Homer ascribes the execution of them to human performance, and frequently represents his heroes calling a council in their own breasts, and acting according to

(Not but his soul, resentful as humane, 436
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train)

the dictates of reason : but in actions unaccountably daring, of a transcendent nature, there they are said to be carried away by a divine impulse of enthusiasm, and it is no longer human reason, but a God that influences the soul.

I have already observed, that Homer makes use of machines sometimes merely for ornament ; this place is an instance of it : here is no action of an uncommon nature performed, and yet Pallas directs Ulysses : Plutarch very justly observes, that whenever the heroes of Homer execute any prodigious exploit of valour, he continually introduces a Deity, who assists in the performance of it ; but it is also true, that to shew the dependance of man upon the assistance of Heaven, he frequently ascribes the common dictates of wisdom to the Goddess of it. If we take the act here inspired by Minerva, as it lies nakedly in Homer, it is no more than a bare command to beg ; an act, that needs not the wisdom of a Goddess to command : but we are to understand it as a direction to Ulysses how to behave before the suitors upon his first appearance, how to carry on his disguise so artfully as to prevent all suspicions, and take his measures so effectually as to work his own re-establishment : in this light, the command becomes worthy of a Goddess : the act of begging is only the method by which he carries on his design ; the consequence of it is the main point in view, namely, the suitors destruction. The rest is only the stratagem, by which he obtains the victory.

v. 435. *And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart ;
(Not but his soul, resentful as humane,
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train).]*

A single virtue, or act of humanity, is not a sufficient atonement for a whole life of insolence and oppression ; so that although some of the suitors should be found less guilty than the rest, yet they are still too guilty to deserve impunity.

With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintiff found,
 Humble he moves, imploring all around.
 The proud feel pity, and relief bestow, 440
 With such an image touch'd of human woe ;
 Enquiring all, their wonder they confess,
 And eye the man, majestick in distress.

While thus they gaze and question with their eyes,
 The bold Melanthius to their thought replies. 445
 My lords ! this stranger of gigantick port
 The good Eumæus usher'd to your court.
 Full well I mark'd the features of his face,
 Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.

And is this present, swineherd ! of thy hand ? 450
 Bring'st thou these vagrants to infest the land !
 (Returns Antinous with retorted eye)
 Objects uncouth ! to check the genial joy.
 Enough of these our court already grace,
 Of giant stomach, and of famish'd face. 455

v. 438. *With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive sound,
 Humble he moves, &c.]*

Homer inserts this particularity to shew the complying nature of Ulysses in all fortunes ; he is every where *πολύτροπος*, it is his distinguishing character in the first verse of the *Odyssey*, and it is visible in every part of it. He is an artist in the trade of begging, as Eustathius observes, and knows how to become the lowest, as well the highest station.

Homer adds, that the suitors were struck with wonder at the sight of Ulysses. That is (says Eustathius) because they never had before seen him in Ithaca, and concluded him to be a foreigner. But I rather think it is a compliment Homer pays to his hero to represent his port and figure to be such, as though a beggar, struck them with astonishment.

Such guests Eumæus to his country brings,
To share our feast, and lead the life of kings.

To whom the hospitable swain rejoin'd :
Thy passion, prince, belies thy knowing mind.
Who calls, from distant nations to his own, 460
The poor, distinguish'd by their wants alone?
Round the wide world are sought those men divine
Who publick structures raise, or who design ;
Those to whose eyes the Gods their ways reveal,
Or bless with salutary arts to heal ; 465
But chief to poets such respect belongs,
By rival nations courted for their songs ;
These states invite and mighty kings admire,
Wide as the sun displays his vital fire.
It is not so with want ! how few that feed 470
A wretch unhappy, merely for his need ?
Unjust to me and all that serve the state,
To love Ulysses is to raise thy hate.
For me, suffice the approbation won
Of my great mistress, and her God-like son. 475

v. 462. *Round the wide world are sought those men divine,*
&c.] This is an evidence of the great honour antiently
paid to persons eminent in mechanick arts : the architect,
and publick artificers, *δημιουργοί*, are joined with the pro-
phet, physician, and poet, who were esteemed almost with
a religious veneration, and looked upon as publick bles-
sings. Honour was antiently given to men in proportion
to the benefits they brought to society : a useless great
man is a burthen to the earth, while the meanest artisan
is beneficial to his fellow-creatures, and useful in his gene-
ration.

To him Telemachus. No more incense
 The man by nature prone to insolence :
 Injurious minds just answers but provoke—
 Then turning to Antinous, thus he spoke.
 Thanks to thy care ! whose absolute command
 Thus drives the stranger from our court and
 land. 481

Heav'n blefs its owner with a better mind !
 From envy free, to charity inclin'd.
 This both Penelope and I afford :
 Then, prince ! be bounteous of Ulyffes' board.
 To give another's is thy hand so slow ? 486
 So much more sweet, to spoil, than to bestow ?

Whence, great Telemachus ! this lofty strain ?
 (Antinous cries with insolent disdain)
 Portions like mine if ev'ry suitor gave, 490
 Our walls this twelvemonth should not see the slave.

He spoke, and lifting high above the board
 His pond'rous footstool, shook it at his lord.
 The rest with equal hand conferr'd the bread ;
 He fill'd his scrip, and to the threshold sped ;
 But first before Antinous stopt, and said. 496 }
 Bestow, my friend ! thou dost not seem the worst
 Of all the Greeks, but prince-like and the first ;

v. 497. *Bestow my friend ! &c.*] Ulyffes here acts with a prudent dissimulation ; he pretends not to have understood the irony of Antinous, nor to have observed his preparation to strike him : and therefore proceeds as if he apprehended no danger. This at once shews the patience of Ulyffes, who is inured to sufferings, and gives a founda-

Then as in dignity, be first in worth,
 And I shall praise thee thro' the boundless earth.
 Once I enjoy'd in luxury of state 501
 Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of great ;
 Wealth, servants, friends, were mine in better days ;
 And hospitality was then my praise ;
 In ev'ry forrowing soul I pour'd delight, 505
 And poverty stood smiling in my sight.
 But Jove, all-governing, whose only will
 Determines fate, and mingles good with ill,
 Sent me (to punish my pursuit of gain)
 With roving pirates o'er th' Ægyptian main : 510

tion for the punishment of Antinous in the conclusion of the *Odyſſey*.

It is observable, that Ulyſſes gives his own hiſtory in the ſame words as in the fourteenth book, yet varies from it in the concluſion ; he there ſpeaks to Eumæus, and Eumæus is here preſent, and hears the ſtory : how is it then that he does not obſerve the falſification of Ulyſſes, and conclude him to be an impoſtor ? Eufſathius labours for an answer ; he imagines that Eumæus was inadvertent, or had forgot the former relation, and yet aſſerts that the reaſon why Ulyſſes tells the ſame hiſtory in part to Antinous, proceeds from a fear of detection in Eumæus. I would rather imagine that Ulyſſes makes the deviation, truſting to the judgment of Eumæus, who might conclude that there was ſome good reaſon why he forbears to let Antinous into the full hiſtory of his life ; eſpecially, becauſe he was an enemy both to Ulyſſes and Eumæus : he might therefore eaſily reflect, that the difference of his ſtory aroſe from prudence and deſign, rather than from impoſture and falſhood.

Hither, to 'scape his chains, my course I steer
Still curst by fortune, and insulted here!

To whom Antinous thus his rage exprest.
What God has plagu'd us with this gormand guest?
Unless at distance, wretch! thou keep behind,
Another isle, than Cyprus more unkind; 531 }
Another Ægypt, shalt thou quickly find.
From all thou beg'st, a bold audacious slave;
Nor all can give so much as thou canst crave.
Nor wonder I, at such profusion shown; 535
Shameless they give, who give what's not their own.

The chief, retiring. Souls like that in thee,
Ill suit such forms of grace and dignity.
Nor will that hand to utmost need afford
The smallest portion of a wasteful board, 540
Whose luxury whole patrimonies sweeps,
Yet starving want, amidst the riot, weeps.

The haughty suitor with resentment burns,
And fow'rly smiling, this reply returns.
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely }
throng: 545 }
And dumb for ever be thy fland'rous tongue!
He said, and high the whirling tripod flung. }

v. 532. *Another Ægypt, &c.*] This passage is a full demonstration that the country was called Ægypt in the days of Homer, as well as the river Nilus; for in the speech he uses *Αἴγυπτος* in the masculine gender to denote the river, and here he calls it *παρθένῳ Αἴγυπτιῳ* in the feminine, to shew that he speaks of the country: the former word agreeing with *πόταμος*, the latter with *γαῖα*,

His shoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle shock ;
 He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock ;
 But shook his thoughtful head, nor more com-
 plain'd, 550

Sedate of soul, his character sustain'd,
 And inly form'd revenge : then back withdrew ;
 Before his feet the well-fill'd scrip he threw,
 And thus with semblance mild address the crew. }

May what I speak your princely minds ap-
 prove, 555

Ye peers and rivals in this noble love !

Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.

If, when the sword our country's quarrel draws,

v. 557. *Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.*] The reasoning of Ulysses in the original is not without some obscurity: for how can it be affirmed, that it is no great affliction to have our property invaded, and to be wounded in the defence of it? The beggar who suffers for asking an alms, has no injury done him, except the violence offered to his person; but it is a double injury, to suffer both in our persons and properties. We must therefore suppose that Ulysses means, that the importance of the cause, when our rights are invaded, is equal to the danger, and that we ought to suffer wounds, or even death, in defence of it; and that a brave man grieves not at such laudable adventures. Or perhaps Ulysses speaks only with respect to Antinous, and means that it is a greater injury to offer violence to the poor and the stranger, than to persons of greater fortunes and station.

Eustathius gives a deeper meaning to the speech of Ulysses; he applies it to his present condition, and it is the same as if he had said openly; It would be no great matter if I had been wounded in defence of my palace

Or if defending what is justly dear,
 From Mars impartial some broad wound we }
 bear ; } 560

The gen'rous motive dignifies the scar.

But for mere want, how hard to suffer wrong ?

Want brings enough of other ills along !

Yet if injustice never be secure,

If fiends revenge, and Gods assert the poor, 565

Death shall lay low the proud aggressor's head,

And make the dust Antinous' bridal bed.

Peace wretch ! and eat thy bread without
 offence,

(The fuitor cry'd) or force shall drag thee hence,

Scourge thro' the publick street, and cast thee
 there, 570

A mangled carcase for the hounds to tear.

His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,

All, ev'n the worst, condemn'd : and some re-
 prov'd.

Was ever chief for wars like these renown'd ?

Ill fits the stranger and the poor to wound. 575

Unblest thy hand ! if in this low disguise

Wander, perhaps, some inmate of the skies ;

and other properties, but to suffer only for asking an alms, this is a deep affliction. So that Ulysses speaks in general, but intends his own particular condition ; and the import of the whole is, I grieve to suffer, not upon any weighty account, but only for being poor and hungry.

They (curious oft' of mortal actions) deign
 In forms like these, to round the earth and main,
 Just and unjust recording in their mind, 580
 And with sure eyes inspecting all mankind.

Telemachus absorpt in thought severe,
 Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear ;

v. 578. *They (curious oft' of mortal actions) &c.]* We have already observed, that it was the opinion of the ancients, that the Gods frequently assumed an human shape. Thus Ovid of Jupiter.

— — — “ Summo delabor Olympo,
 “ Et Deus humanâ lustro sub imagine terras.”

I refer the reader to the objections of Plato, mentioned in the preceding book. It is observable, that Homer puts this remarkable truth into the mouth of the suitors, to shew that it was certain and undeniable, when it is attested even by such persons as had no piety or religion.

v. 582. *Telemachus — — —*

Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear.]

This is spoken with particular judgment ; Telemachus is here to act the part of a wise man, not of a tender son ; he restrains his tears lest they should betray his father, it being improbable that he should weep for a vagabond and beggar. We find he has profited by the instructions of Ulysses, and practises the injunctions given in the former book.

— — If scorn insult my reverend age,
 Bear it, my son : repress thy rising rage.
 If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,
 Bear it my son, tho' thy brave heart rebel.

Telemachus struggles against the yearnings of nature, and shews himself to be a master of his passions ; he must therefore be thought to exert an act of wisdom, not of insensibility.

But the dark brow of silent sorrow shook :
 While thus his mother to her virgins spoke. 585

“ On him and his may the bright God of day
 “ That base, inhospitable blow repay !”

The nurse replies : “ If Jove receives my pray'r,
 “ Not one survives to breathe to-morrow's air.”

All, all are foes, and mischief is their end ; 590
 Antinous most to gloomy death a friend ;
 (Replies the queen) the stranger begg'd their grace,
 And melting pity soften'd ev'ry face ;
 From ev'ry other hand redress he found,
 But fell Antinous answer'd with a wound. 595

Amidst her maids thus spoke the prudent queen,
 Then bid Eumæus call the pilgrim in.
 Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,
 If or his certain eye, or list'ning ear
 Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring lord? 600
 Thus she, and good Eumæus took the word.

A private audience if thy grace impart,
 The stranger's words may ease the royal heart.
 His sacred eloquence in balm distils,
 And the sooth'd heart with secret pleasure fills. 605
 Three days have spent their beams, three nights
 have run

Their silent journey, since his tale begun,
 Unfinish'd yet ! and yet I thirst to hear !
 As when some Heav'n-taught poet charms the ear,
 (Suspending sorrow with celestial strain 610
 Breath'd from the Gods to soften human pain)

Time steals away with unregarded wing,
And the foul hears him, tho' he cease to sing.

Ulysses late he saw, on Cretan ground,
(His father's guest) for Minos' birth renown'd. 615
He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er
With boundless treasure, from Thesprotia's shore.

To this the queen. The wand'rer let me hear,
While yon luxuriant race indulge their cheer,
Devour the grazing ox and browsing goat, 620
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.
For where's an arm, like thine Ulysses! strong,
To curb wild riot and to punish wrong?

v. 615. — — *for Minos' birth renown'd.*] Diodorus Siculus thus writes of Minos: " He was the son of Jupiter and
" Europa, who was fabled to be carried by a bull, that is,
" in a ship called the bull, or that had the image of a bull
" carved upon its prow) into Crete: here Minos reigned,
" and built many cities: he established many laws among
" the Cretans: he also provided a navy, by which he
" subdued many of the adjacent islands. The expres-
" sion in the Greek will bear a two-fold sense; and im-
" plies either where Minos *was born*, or where the *de-*
" *scendants* of Minos *reign*; for Idomenæus, who go-
" verned Crete in the days of Ulysses, was a descendant
" of Minos, from his son Deucalion."

Homer mentions it as an honour to Crete, to have given birth to so great a law-giver as Minos; and it is universally true, that every great man is an honour to his country: Athens did not give reputation to learned men, but learned men to Athens.

She spoke. Telemachus then sneez'd aloud ;
 Constrain'd, his nostril echo'd thro' the crowd. 625

v. 624. — *Telemachus then sneez'd aloud.*] Eustathius fully explains the nature of this omen ; for sneezing was reckoned ominous both by the Greeks and Romans. While Penelope uttered these words, Telemachus sneezes ; Penelope accepts the omen, and expects the words to be verified. The original of the veneration paid to sneezing is this : The head is the most sacred part of the body, the seat of thought and reason : now the sneeze coming from the head, the ancients looked upon it as a sign or omen, and believed it to be sent by Jupiter ; therefore they regarded it with a kind of adoration : the reader will have a full idea of the nature of the omen of sneezing here mentioned, from a singular instance in lib. iii. of Xenophon, in his expedition of Cyrus. Xenophon having ended a short speech to his soldiers with these words, viz. “ We have many reasons to hope for preservation ; ” they were scarce uttered, when a certain soldier sneezed : the whole army took the omen, and at once paid adoration to the Gods ; then Xenophon resuming his discourse, proceeded, “ Since, my fellow-soldiers, at the mention “ of our preservation, Jupiter has sent this omen,” &c. So that Xenophon fully explains Homer :

Sneezing was likewise reckoned ominous by the Romans. Thus Catullus,

“ Hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante
 “ Dextram sternuit approbationem.”

Thus also Propertius,

“ Num tibi nascenti primis, mea vita, diebus
 “ Aridus argutum sternuit omen amor.

We find in all these instances that sneezing was constantly received as a good omen, or a sign of approbation from

The smiling queen the happy omen blest :

“ So may these impious fall, by Fate oppress’d !”

Then to Eumæus : bring the stranger, fly !

And if my questions meet a true reply,

Grac’d with a decent robe he shall retire, 630

A gift in season which his wants require.

Thus spake Penelope. Eumæus flies

In duteous haste, and to Ulysses cries.

The queen invites thee, venerable guest !

A secret instinct moves her troubled breast, 635

Of her long absent lord from thee to gain

Some light, and soothe her soul’s eternal pain.

If true, if faithful thou ; her grateful mind

Of decent robes a present has design’d :

the Gods. In these ages we pay an idle superstition to sneezing, but it is ever looked upon as a bad omen, and we cry, *God blefs you*, upon hearing it, as the Greeks in later times said *ζῆθι* or *ζεῦ ἑώσον*. We are told this custom arose from a mortal distemper that affected the head, and threw the patient into convulsive sneezings that occasioned his death.

I will only add from Eustathius, that Homer expresses the loudness of the sneezing, to give a reason why Penelope heard it, she being in an apartment at some distance from Telemachus.

The sneezing likewise gives us the reason why Penelope immediately commands Eumæus to introduce the beggar into her presence : the omen gave her hopes to hear of Ulysses ; she saw the beggar was a stranger, and a traveller, and therefore expected he might be able to give her some information.

So finding favour in the royal eye, 640

Thy other wants her subjects shall supply.

Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)

My words shall dictate, and my lips shall guide.

To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,

In equal woes, alas! involv'd by Heav'n. 645

Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear

I stand: the hand of violence is here:

Here boundless wrongs the starry skies invade,

And injur'd suppliants seek in vain for aid.

Let for a space the pensive queen attend, 650

Nor claim my story till the sun descend;

Then in such robes as suppliants may require,

Compos'd and chearful by the genial fire,

When loud uproar and lawless riot cease,

Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace. 655

Swift to the queen returns the gentle swain:

And say, (she cries) does fear, or shame, detain

v. 644. *To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by Heav'n.]*

These words bear a double sense; one applicable to the speaker, the other to the reader: the reader, who knows this beggar to be Ulysses, is pleas'd with the concealed meaning, and hears with pleasure the beggar affirming that he is fully instructed in the misfortunes of Ulysses: but speaking in the character of a beggar, he keeps Eumæus in ignorance, who believes he is reciting the adventures of a friend, while he really gives his own history.

The cautious stranger ; With the begging kind
Shame suits but ill. Eumæus thus rejoin'd :

He only asks a more propitious hour, 660
And shuns (who would not ?) wicked men in pow'r;
At ev'ning mild (meet season to confer)
By turns to question, and by turns to hear.

Whoe'er this guest (the prudent queen replies)
His ev'ry step and ev'ry thought is wise. 665
For men, like these, on earth he shall not find
In all the miscreant race of human kind.

Thus she. Eumæus all her words attends,
And parting, to the suitor pow'rs descends ;
There seeks Telemachus, and thus apart 670
In whispers breathes the fondness of his heart.

The time, my lord, invites me to repair
Hence to the lodge ; my charge demands my care.
These sons of murder thirst thy life to take ;
O guard it, guard it for thy servant's sake ! 675

Thanks to my friend, he cries ; but now the hour
Of night draws on, go seek the rural bow'r :
But first refresh : and at the dawn of day
Hither a victim to the Gods convey.
Our life to Heav'ns immortal Pow'rs we trust, 680
Safe in their care, for Heav'n protects the just.

v. 676. — *but now the hour Of night draws on*—] The reader may look back to the beginning of the preceding book, for the explication of *δείδειλον ἡμῶν*, here mentioned by Homer.

Observant of his voice, Eumæus sat
And fed recumbent on a chair of state.
Then instant rose, and as he mov'd along
'Twas riot all amid the fuitor-throng, 685 }
They feast, they dance, and raise the mirthful song. }
'Till now declining tow'rd the close of day,
The sun obliquely shot his dewy ray.

This book does not fully comprehend the space of one day: it begins with the morning, and ends before night, so that the time here mentioned by the poet, is the evening of the thirty-ninth day.

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T H E

E I G H T E E N T H B O O K

O F T H E

O D Y S S E Y .

THE
A R G U M E N T.

The Fight of Ulysses and Irus.

THE beggar Irus insults Ulysses; the suitors promote the quarrel, in which Irus is worsted, and miserably handled. Penelope descends, and receives the presents of the suitors. The Dialogue of Ulysses with Eurymachus.

T H E

* E I G H T E E N T H B O O K

O F T H E

O D Y S S E Y.

WHILE fix'd in thought the pensive hero
fat,

A mendicant approach'd the royal gate ;
A surly vagrant of the giant kind,
The stain of manhood, of a coward mind:

* Homer has been severely blamed for describing Ulysses, a king, entering the lists with a beggar: Rapin affirms, that he demeans himself by engaging with an unequal adversary. The objection would be unanswerable, if Ulysses appeared in his royal character: but it is as necessary in epick poetry, as on the theatre, to adapt the behaviour of every person to the character he is to represent, whether real or imaginary. Would it not have been ridiculous to have represented him, while he was disguised in the garb of a beggar, refusing the combat, because he knew himself to be a king? and would not such a conduct have endangered a discovery? Ought we not rather to look upon this episode as an instance of the greatness of the calamities of Ulysses, who is reduced to

From feast to feast, infatiate to devour 5
 He flew, attendant on the genial hour.
 Him on his mother's knees, when babe he lay,
 She nam'd Arnæus on his natal day :

such uncommon extremities as to be fet upon a level with
 the meanest of wretches ?

v. 8. *She nam'd Arnæus*——] It seems probable from
 this passage, that the mother gave the name to the child
 in the days of Homer ; though perhaps not without the
 concurrence of the father : thus in the scriptures it is
 said of Leah, that *she bare a son and called his name Reu-*
ben ; and again, *she called his name Simeon* ; and the same
 is frequently repeated both of Leah and Rachel. In the
 age of Aristophanes, the giving a name to the child seems
 to have been a divided prerogative between the father
 and mother : for in his Νέφελαι there is a dispute between
 Strepsiades and his wife, concerning the name of their
 son : the wife was of noble birth, and would therefore
 give him a noble name ; the husband was a plain vil-
 lager, and was rather for a name that denoted frugality :
 but the woman not waving the least branch of her pre-
 rogative, they compromised the affair, by giving the child
 a compounded name that implied both frugality and chi-
 valry, derived from φείδω *to spare*, and ἵππος *an horse* ;
 and the young cavalier's name was Phidippides. Eusta-
 thius affirms, that antiently the mother named the child ;
 and the scholiast upon Aristophanes in avib. quotes a
 fragment from Euripides to this purpose from a play
 called Ægeus.

Τὸ σὲ μάλιστα ἐν δεκάτῃ τήνῃ ὠνόμασε.

*What was the name given on the tenth day by the mother to
 thee, the child ?* Dacier tells us, that the name of Arnæus
 was prophetic ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρνῶν, *from the sheep the glutton would*

But Irus his associates call'd the boy,
 Practis'd the common messenger to fly ; 10 }
 Irus, a name expressive of th' employ.

From his own roof, with meditated blows,
 He strove to drive the man of mighty woes.

Hence dotard, hence! and timely speed thy way,
 Lest dragg'd in vengeance thou repent thy stay ; 15
 See how with nods assent yon princely train!
 But honouring age, in mercy I refrain ;
 In peace away! lest, if persuasions fail,
 This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.

To whom, with stern regard: O insolence, 20
 Indecently to rail without offence!
 What bounty gives, without a rival share ;
 I ask, what harms not thee, to breathe this air :

devour when he came to manhood; but this is mere fancy, and it is no reason, because he proved a glutton, that therefore the name foretold it; one might rather think the fondness of the mother toward her infant, suggested a very different view: she gave the name according to her wishes, and flattered herself that he would prove a very rich man, *a man of many flocks and herds*: and therefore she called him Ἀργαῖος: and this is the more probable, because all riches originally consisted in flocks and herds.

v. 11. *Irus a name expressive of th' employ.*] To understand this, we must have recourse to the derivation of the word Irus; it comes from εἶρω, which signifies *nuncio*; Irus was therefore so called, because he was a public messenger; and Irus bears that name, as the messenger of the Gods; ἱεῖς, ἀπαγγέλλων; ἱεῖς, ἄγγελος. *Hesychius.*

Alike on alms we both precarious live :
 And canst thou envy, when the great relieve ? 25
 Know from the bounteous Heav'ns all riches flow,
 And what man gives, the Gods by man bestow ;
 Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,
 Lest I imprint my vengeance in thy blood ;
 Old as I am, should once my fury burn, 30
 How would'st thou fly; nor ev'n in thought return ?

Mere woman-glutton ! (thus the churl reply'd)
 A tongue so flippant, with a throat so wide !
 Why cease I, Gods ! to dash those teeth away,
 Like some vile boar's, that greedy of his prey 35
 Uproots the bearded corn ? rise, try the fight,
 Gird well thy loins, approach and feel my might :

v. 34. — — *To dash those teeth away,
 Like some wild boar's]*

These words refer to a custom that prevailed in former ages: it was allowed to strike out the teeth of any beast which the owner found in his grounds: Eustathius informs us, that this was a custom or law amongst the people of Cyprus; but from what Homer here speaks, it seems to have been a general practice; at least it was in use amongst the Ithacans.

v. 37. *Gird well thy loins.]* We may gather from hence the manner of the single combat; the champions fought naked, and only made use of a cincture round the loins out of decency. Homer directly affirms it, when Ulysses prepares for the fight.

Then girding his strong loins, the king prepares
 To close in combat, and his body bares ;

Sure of defeat, before the peers engage ;
 Unequal fight ! when youth contends with age !

Thus in a wordy war their tongues display 40
 More fierce intents, preluding to the fray ;
 Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,
 Thus with loud laughter to the suitor-train.

This happy day in mirth, my friends, employ,
 And lo ! the Gods conspire to crown our joy. 45
 See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,
 Yon furly mendicants contentious stand ;
 Why urge we not to blows ? Well pleas'd they
 spring
 Swift from their seats, and thick'ning form a
 ring. 49

To whom Antinous. Lo ! enrich'd with blood,
 A kid's well-fatted entrails (tasteful food)
 On glowing embers lie ; on him bestow
 The choicest portion who subdues his foe ;

Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs
 By just degrees like well turn'd columns rise ;
 Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,
 And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong.

Thus Diomed in the Iliad girds his friend Euryalus when
 he engages Epæus.

 Officious with the cincture girds him round.

The speeches here are short, and the periods remarkably
 concise, suitable to the nature of anger. The reader may
 consult the annotations on the xxth book, concerning the
 goat's entrails mentioned here by Antinous.

Grant him unrival'd in these walls to stay,
The sole attendant on the genial day. 55

The lords applaud: Ulysses then with art,
And fears well-feign'd, disguis'd his dauntless heart:

Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe;
Say, is it baseness, to decline the foe?
Hard conflict! when calamity and age 60

With vig'rous youth, unknown to cares, engage!
Yet fearful of disgrace, to try the day
Imperious hunger bids, and I obey;
But swear, impartial arbiters of right,
Swear to stand neutral, while we cope in fight. 65

The peers assent: when straight his sacred head
Telemachus uprais'd, and sternly said.

Stranger, if prompted to chastise the wrong
Of this bold insolent; confide, be strong!
Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow, 70
That instant makes Telemachus his foe;

v. 64. *But swear, impartial arbiters of right,
Swear to stand neutral, while we cope in fight.]*

This is a very necessary precaution: Ulysses has reason to apprehend that the suitors would interest themselves in the cause of Irus, who was their daily attendant, rather than in that of a perfect stranger. Homer takes care to point out the prudence of Ulysses upon every emergence: besides, he raises this fray between two beggars into some dignity, by requiring the sanction of an oath to regulate the laws of the combat. It is the same solemnity used in the Iliad between Paris and Menelaus, and represents these combatants engaging with the formality of two heroes.

And these my friends * shall guard the sacred ties
Of hospitality, for they are wise.

Then girding his strong loins, the king prepares
To close in combat, and his body bares ; 75
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs
By just degrees, like well-turn'd columns, rise :
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,
And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong,
(Attendant on her chief :) the suitor-crowd 80
With wonder gaze, and gazing speak aloud ;
Irus ! alas ! shall Irus be no more,
Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour !

v. 72. *And these my friends shall guard the sacred ties
Of hospitality, for they are wise.*]

When Telemachus speaks these words, he is to be supposed to turn to Eurymachus and Antinous, to whom he directs his discourse. It must be allowed that this is an artful piece of flattery in Telemachus, and he makes use of it to engage these two princes, who were the chief of the suitors, on his side.

v. 82. *Irus, alas ! shall Irus be no more.*] This is literally translated : I confess I wish Homer had omitted these little collusions of words : he sports with Ἴριος ἄϊριος. It is a low conceit, alluding to the derivation of Irus, and means that he shall never more be a messenger. The translation, though it be verbal, yet it is free from ambiguity, and the joke concealed in ἄϊριος ; this will be evident, if we substitute another name in the place of Irus : we may say Achilles shall be no longer Achilles, without descending from the gravity of epick poetry.

* Antinous and Eurymachus:

Gods! how his nerves a matchless strength proclaim :

Swell o'er his well-strung limbs, and brace his frame ! 85

Then pale with fears, and sick'ning at the sight,
They dragg'd th' unwilling Irus to the fight ;
From his blank visage fled the coward blood,
And his flesh trembled as aghast he stood :

O that such baseness should disgrace the light !
O hide it, death, in everlasting night ! 91
(Exclaims Antinous) can a vig'rous foe
Meanly decline to combat age and woe ?
But hear me, wretch! if recreant in the fray,
That huge bulk yield this ill-contested day : 95

v. 90. *O! that such baseness should disgrace the light !
Oh! hide it, death, &c.]*

Eustathius gives us an instance of the deep penetration of some criticks, in their comments upon these words : they have found in them the philosophy of Pythagoras, and the transmigration of souls. The verse stands thus in Homer ;

Νῦν μὲν μὴτ' εἶς βεγᾶϊε, μήτε γένοιο :

which they imagine is to be understood after this manner ; *I wish thou hadst never been born ! and mayst thou never exist again, or have a second being !* To recite such an absurdity is to refute it. The verse when literally rendered bears this import ; *I wish thou wert now dead, or hadst never been born !* an imprecation very natural to persons in anger, who seldom give themselves time to speak with profound allusions to philosophy.

Instant thou fail'st, to Echetus resign'd ;
 A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant-kind,
 Who casts thy mangled ears and nose a prey
 To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.

While with indignant scorn he sternly spoke, 100
 In ev'ry joint the trembling Irus shook ;
 Now front to front each frowning champion stands,
 And poises high in air his adverse hands.
 The chief yet doubts, or to the shades below
 To fell the giant at one vengeful blow, 105

v. 96. *Instant thou fail'st, to Echetus resign'd ;
 A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant-kind.]*

The tradition concerning Echetus stands thus : he was king of Epirus, the son of Euchenor and Phlogea : he had a daughter called Metopè, or as others affirm, Amphissa ; she being corrupted by Æchmodicus, Echetus put out her eyes, and condemned her to grind pieces of iron made in the resemblance of corn ; and told her she should recover her sight when she had ground the iron into flour. He invited Æchmodicus to an entertainment, and cut off the extremities from all parts of his body, and cast them to the dogs ; at length being seized with madness, he fed upon his own flesh, and died. This history is confirmed, lib. iv. of Apollonius,

Υβριστης Ἐχέτου γλῆναις ἐνὶ χάλκεα κέντρα
 Πῆξε θυγατρὸς ἑῆς, σονόεντι δὲ κάρφεται ὄττω.
 Ὀρφναίη ἐνὶ χαλκὸν ἀλετρεύουσα καλιῆ.

I wonder how this last quotation escaped the diligence of Eustathius. Dacier affirms, that no mention is made of Echetus by any of the Greek historians, and therefore she has recourse to another tradition, preserved by Eusta-

Or save his life ; and soon his life to save
 The king resolves, for mercy sways the brave.
 That instant Irus his huge arm extends,
 Full on the shoulder the rude weight descends ;
 The sage Ulysses, fearful to disclose 110
 The hero latent in the man of woes,
 Check'd half his might ; yet rising to the stroke,
 His jaw-bone dash'd, the crashing jaw-bone broke :
 Down dropp'd he stupid from the stunning wound ;
 His feet extended, quiv'ring beat the ground ; 115
 His mouth and nostrils spout a purple flood ;
 His teeth, all shatter'd, rush inmix'd with blood.

The peers transported, as outstretch'd he lies,
 With bursts of laughter rend the vaulted skies ;
 Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the
 wound, 120

His length of carcass trailing prints the ground ;
 Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,
 'Till propp'd, reclining on the palace walls ;
 Then to his hand a staff the victor gave, 124
 And thus with just reproach address'd the slave.

There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign
 A dreaded tyrant o'er the bestial train !
 But mercy to the poor and stranger show,
 Lest Heav'n in vengeance send some mightier woe.

thus, who tells us, that Echetus was contemporary with
 Homer, that the poet had been ill used by him, and there-
 fore took this revenge for his inhumanity.

Scornful he spoke, and o'er his shoulder
 flung 130

The broad patch'd scrip; the scrip in tatters hung
 Ill-join'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.

Then, turning short, disdain'd a further stay;
 But to the palace measur'd back the way.

There as he rested, gathering in a ring 135
 The peers with smiles address their unknown king:
 Stranger, may Jove and all th' aerial Pow'rs,
 With ev'ry blessing crown thy happy hours?
 Our freedom to thy prowess'd arm we owe
 From bold intrusion of thy coward foe; 140
 Instant the flying sail the slave shall wing
 To Echetus, the monster of a king.

While pleas'd he hears, Antinous bears the food,
 A kid's well fatted entrails, rich with blood:
 The bread from canisters of shining mold 145
 Amphinous; and wines that laugh in gold:
 And oh! (he mildly cries) may Heav'n display
 A beam of glory o'er thy future day!

v. 140. *From bold intrusion of thy coward foe.*] The word in the Greek is ἀναλτον. Γάστρα ἀναλτον is a voracious appetite: a stomach that nothing can satisfy: Hesychius thus explains it; ἀναλτον ἀναυξες, τῷτ' ἐστὶν ἰκανόν, ἢ ἀπλήρωτον παρὰ τὴν ἄλσιν. But there is undoubtedly an error in Hesychius; instead of ἰκανόν we should read ἰσχνόν, that is meager, or a stomach that appears always unfilled. The general moral that we are to gather from the behaviour of Ulysses and Irus, is that insolence and boasting are signs of cowardice.

Alas, the brave too oft is doom'd to bear
 The gripes of poverty, and stings of care. 150

To whom with thought mature the king replies :
 The tongue speaks wisely, when the soul is wise ;
 Such was thy father ! in imperial state,
 Great without vice, that oft attends the great :
 Nor from the fire art thou, the son, declin'd ;
 Then hear my words, and grave them in thy
 mind! 156

v. 156. *Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!*]
 There never was a finer lecture of morality read in any of
 the schools of the philosophers, than this which Ulysses de-
 livers to Amphinomus ; he ushers it in with great so-
 lemnity, and speaks to all mankind in the person of Am-
 phinomus. It is quoted by a variety of authors : Pliny in
 his preface to his Natural History, lib. 7. has wrote a dis-
 sertation on this sentence.

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,
 Most vain is man, &c.

Aristotle and Maximus Tyrius quote it ; and Plutarch
 twice refers to it. Homer considers man both with re-
 spect to the errors of the mind, and the calamities inci-
 dent to the body : and upon a review of all mortal crea-
 tures, he attributes to man the unhappy superiority of mi-
 series. But indeed Homer is so plain that he needs no in-
 terpretation, and any words but his own must disgrace
 him. Besides, this speech is beautiful in another view,
 and excellently sets forth the forgiving temper of Ulysses ;
 he saw that all the sparks of virtue and humanity were
 not extinguished in Amphinomus ; he therefore warns
 him with great solemnity to forsake the suitors ; he im-
 prints conviction upon his mind, though ineffectually,

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,
 Most vain is man ! calamitous by birth ;
 To-day with pow'r elate, in strength he blooms ;
 The haughty creature on that pow'r presumes : 160
 Anon from Heav'n a sad reverse he feels ;
 Untaught to bear, 'gainst Heav'n the wretch rebels.
 For man is changeful, as his blifs or woe ;
 Too high when prosp'rous, when distrest too low.

and shews by it, that when he falls by the hand of Ulyf-
 fes in the succeeding parts of the *Odyssey*, his death is not
 a revenge but a punishment.

v. 163. *For man is changeful, as his blifs or woe.*] Most
 of the interpreters have greatly misrepresented these
 words,

Τοῖσδε γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
 Ὅσον ἐπ' ἡμᾶς ἄγησι.

They thus translate it, *talis mens hominum, qualem Deus sug-
 gerit* ; or, “ Such is the mind of man, as Heav'n in-
 “ spires :” but this is an error, for *ὅσον* cannot refer to
νόσδε, but to *ἡμᾶς*, and the sentence is thus to be rendered,
Talis mens hominum, qualem diem Deus inducit ; that is,
 “ The mind of man changes with the complexion of
 “ the day, as Heav'n sends happiness or misery :” or
 as in the translation,

For man is changeful, as his blifs or woe ;
 Too high when prosp'rous, when distrest'd too low.

The reader will be convinced that the construction re-
 quires this sense, by joining the preposition with the verb,
ἐπὶ with *ἄγησι*, and rendering it, *ὅσον ἡμᾶς ἐπάγησι* ; nothing
 being more frequent than such a division of the preposi-

There was a day, when with the scornful great
I swell'd in pomp and arrogance of state ; 166

Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs ;
And us'd that pow'r to justify my wrongs.

Then let not man be proud ; but firm of mind,
Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign'd ; 170

Be dumb when Heav'n afflicts ! unlike yon train
Of haughty spoilers, insolently vain ;

Who make their queen and all her wealth a prey ;
But vengeance and Ulysses wing their way.

O may'st thou, favour'd by some guardian Pow'r,
Far, far be distant in that deathful hour ! 176

For sure I am, if stern Ulysses breathe,
These lawless riots end in blood and death.

Then to the Gods the rosy juice he pours,
And the drain'd goblet to the chief restores. 180

Stung to the soul, o'ercastr with holy dread,
He shook the graceful honours of his head ;

His boding mind the future woe forestalls ;
In vain ! by great Telemachus he falls,

For Pallas seals his doom : all sad he turns 185
To join the peers ; resumes his throne, and

mourns.

tion from the verb amongst the Greeks. It must be allowed, that Homer gives a very unhappy, yet too just a picture, of human nature : man is too apt to be proud and insolent in prosperity, and mean and abject in adversity ; and those men who are most overbearing in an happy state, are always most base and mean in the day of affliction.

Meanwhile Minerva with instinctive fires
 Thy soul, Penelope, from Heav'n inspires :
 With flatt'ring hopes the suitors to betray,
 And seem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day : 190
 Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise ;
 And crown the mother and the wife with praise.

v. 189. *With flatt'ring hopes the suitors to betray.*] The Greek is very concise, and the expression uncommon, ἔπος πετάσειε θυμὸν μνησέων; that is, Penelope thus acted that she might dilate the heart of the suitors; meaning (as Eustathius observes) that she might give them false hopes by appearing in their company; for the heart shrinks, and is contracted by sorrow and despair, and is again dilated by hope or joy: this is I believe literally true, the spirits flow briskly when we are in joy, and a new pulse is given to the blood, which necessarily must dilate the heart: on the contrary, when we are in sorrow the spirits are languid, and the blood moves less actively; and therefore the heart shrinks and contracts, the blood wanting vigour to dilate and expand it.

v. 191. *Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise.*] This is solely the act of Minerva, for Penelope is ignorant that she is to appear before her husband. This interview is excellently managed by Homer: Ulysses is to be convinced of his wife's fidelity; to bring this about, he introduces her upon the publick stage, where her husband stands as a common unconcerned spectator, and hears her express her love for him in the warmest terms; here is no room for art or design, because she is ignorant that she speaks before Ulysses; and therefore her words must be supposed to proceed from the heart. This gives us a reason why Homer makes her dwell at large upon her passion for Ulysses, and paint in the strongest co-

Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,
Thus with a transient smile the matron cries:

Eurynomè! to go where riot reigns 195
I feel an impulse, though my soul disdains;

lours, viz. to evidence her chastity, and urge Ulysses to hasten the destruction of the suitors, by convincing him that she is able no longer to elude the marriage hour. But then it may be objected, if Penelope's sole design was to give a false hope to the suitors, does she not take a very wrong method, by speaking so very tenderly of Ulysses? is not this a more probable reason for despair than hope? It is true, it would have been so, if in the conclusion of her speech she had not artfully added,

But when my son grows man, the royal sway
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day!

So that Telemachus being grown up to maturity, the suitors concluded that the nuptial hour was at hand. If then we consider the whole conduct of Penelope in this book, it must be allowed to be very refined and artful; she observes a due regard towards Ulysses, by shewing she is not to be persuaded to marry: and yet by the same words she gives the suitors hopes that the day is almost come when she intends to celebrate her nuptials; she manages so dexterously as to persuade without a promise; and for this reason the words are put into the mouth of Ulysses, and it is Ulysses who gives the hopes, rather than Penelope.

v. 193. *Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,
Thus with a transient smile the matron cries.]*

Homer gives us a very beautiful and just image in these words. In the Iliad he used a similar expression concerning Andromache, *δακρυόεν γελᾶσατα*; *A smile chafis'd with tears.* *Ἀχρεῖον δ' ἐγέλασσειν* here bears the same import.

To my lov'd son the snares of death to show,
 And in the traitor-friend unmask the foe ;
 Who smooth of tongue, in purpose insincere,
 Hides fraud in smiles, while death is ambush'd
 there. 200

Go warn thy son, nor be the warning vain,
 (Reply'd the sagest of the royal train)
 But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd descend ;
 Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend ;
 The tide of flowing tears a-while suppress ; 205
 Tears but indulge the sorrow, not repress.
 Some joy remains : to thee a son is giv'n,
 Such as in fondness parents ask of Heav'n.

v. 207. — — — *To thee a son is giv'n,
 Such as in fondness parents ask of Heav'n.]*

I am not certain that this is the exact sense of Homer ; Dacier understands him very differently. Eurynomè (observes that author) is not endeavouring to comfort Penelope because her son is now come to years of maturity ; her purpose is, to shew the necessity she has to have recourse to art, to assist her beauty : for (adds she) your son is grown a man ; meaning that a lady who has a son twenty years old, must have lost her natural beauty, and has occasion to be obliged to art to give her an artificial one. This, I confess, is too true, but it seems a little too ludicrous for epick poetry ; I have followed a different sense, that gives us a far nobler image ; conformable to that verse of Horace.

“ Quid voveat dulcî nutricula majus alumno,
 “ Quam sapere, &c.”

Ah me ! forbear, returns the queen, forbear,
 Oh ! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care ; 210
 No more I bathe, since he no longer sees
 Those charms, for whom alone I wish to please.
 The day that bore Ulysses from this coast,
 Blasted the little bloom these cheeks could boast.
 But instant bid Autonoè descend, 215
 Instant Hippodamè our steps attend ;
 Ill suits it female virtue, to be seen
 Alone, indecent, in the walks of men.

Then while Eurynomè the mandate bears,
 From heav'n Minerva shoots with guardian cares ;
 O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest, 221
 She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest,
 With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,
 Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her
 charms,
 In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires, 225
 (Immortal gifts ! to kindle soft desires)
 From limb to limb an air majestick sheds,
 And the pure iv'ry o'er her bosom spreads.

This agrees with the tenour of Euryclea's speech, and is
 a foundation of great comfort to Penelope.

v. 221. *O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest,
 She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.]*

This is an admirable stroke of art, to shew the determined
 resolution of Penelope, to forbear the endeavour of making
 her person agreeable in any eyes but those of Ulysses : a
 goddess is obliged to cast her into an involuntary repose,
 and to supply an adventitious grace while she sleeps,

Such Venus shines, when with a measur'd bound
 She smoothly gliding swims th' harmonious
 round, 230

When with the Graces in the dance she moves,
 And fires the gazing Gods with ardent loves.

Then to the skies her flight Minerva bends,
 And to the queen the damsel-train descends:
 Wak'd at their steps, her flowing eyes un-
 close; 235

The tear she wipes, and thus renews her woes.

Howe'er 'tis well; that sleep a-while can free
 With soft forgetfulness, a wretch like me;
 Oh! were it giv'n to yield this transient breath,
 Send, oh! Diana, send the sleep of death! 240
 Why must I waste a tedious life in tears,
 Nor bury in the silent grave my cares?

v. 233. *Then to the skies her flight Minerva bends.*] We see Penelope is a woman of so much wisdom, as to be the favourite of Minerva. She acts in every point with the highest discretion, and is inconsolable for her husband; yet the poet forbears to let her into the secret that Ulysses is returned: this is undoubtedly an intended satire, and Homer means, that a woman in every point discreet, is still to be suspected of loquacity: this seems to have been the real sentiment of Homer, which he more fully declares in the eleventh Odyssy.

When earnest to explore thy secret breast,
 Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest;
 For since of woman-kind so few are just,
 Think all are false, nor ev'n the faithful trust.

O my Ulysses ! ever honour'd name !
 For thee I mourn, till death dissolves my frame.

Thus wailing, slow and sadly she descends, 245
 On either hand a damsel-train attends :
 Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
 Radiant before the gazing peers she stands ;
 A veil translucent o'er her brow display'd,
 Her beauty seems, and only seems, to shade : 250
 Sudden she lightens in their dazled eyes,
 And sudden flames in ev'ry bosom rise ;
 They send their eager souls with ev'ry look,
 'Till silence thus th' imperial matron broke :

O why ! my son, why now no more appears
 That warmth of soul that urg'd thy younger
 years ? 256

Thy riper days no growing worth impart,
 A man in stature, still a boy in heart !
 Thy well-knit frame unprofitably strong,
 Speaks thee an hero from an hero sprung : 260
 But the just Gods in vain those gifts bestow,
 O wife alone in form, and brave in show !
 Heav'ns ! could a stranger feel oppression's hand
 Beneath thy roof, and could'st thou tamely stand ?
 If thou the stranger's righteous cause decline, 265
 His is the suff'rance, but the shame is thine.

To whom with filial awe, the prince returns :
 That gen'rous soul with just resentment burns,
 Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow,
 For others good, and melt at others woe : 270

But impotent these riots to repel,
 I bear their outrage, tho' my soul rebel :
 Helpless amid the snares of death I tread,
 And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread ;
 But now no crime is theirs : this wrong pro-
 ceeds 275

From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.
 O would to Jove ! or her whose arms display
 The shield of Jove, or him who rules the day !
 That you' proud suitors, who licentious tread
 These courts, within these courts like Irus bled :
 Whose loose head tott'ring, as with wine op-
 prest, 281

Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast ;
 Pow'less to move, his stagg'ring feet deny
 The coward wretch the privilege to fly.

Then to the queen Eurymachus replies ; 285
 O justly lov'd, and not more fair than wife !

v. 275. — — *this wrong proceeds*
From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.]

Eustathius informs us, that we are here to understand the fray between Irus and Ulysses. Penelope refers to the violence intended to be offered to Ulysses, when the footstool was thrown at him by Antinous ; we find that she was acquainted with that assault from her speech in the preceding book. In reality, the queen was ignorant of the combat between Irus and Ulysses ; but Telemachus misunderstands her with design, and makes an apology for the suitors, fearing to raise a further disorder, or provoke them to some more violent act of resentment.

Now, grief, thou all art mine! the Gods o'ercaſt
 My ſoul with woes, that long, ah long muſt
 laſt! 300

Too faithfully my heart retains the day
 That ſadly tore my royal lord away :
 He graſp'd my hand, and oh my ſpouſe! I leave
 Thy arms, (he cry'd) perhaps to find a grave :
 Fame ſpeaks the Trojans bold ; they boaſt the
 ſkill 305

To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
 To dart the ſpear, and guide the ruſhing car
 With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war.
 My ſentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed
 Perhaps by righteous Heav'n that I muſt bleed !
 My father, mother, all, I truſt to thee ; 311
 To them, to them transfer the love of me :
 But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway
 Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day!

Morea would admire her beauty, this would leſſen the
 compliment ; nor is any reaſon to be aſſigned why
 Peloponneſus ſhould admire her more than the reſt of the
 Greeks.

v. 313. *But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway
 Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day.]*

The original ſays, *reſign the palace to Telemachus* : this is
 ſpoken according to the cuſtoms of antiquity : the wife,
 upon her ſecond marriage, being obliged to reſign the
 houſe to the heir of the family. This circumſtance is in-
 ferted with great judgment : the ſuitors were determined
 to ſeize it upon marriage with Penelope, as appears from
 the ſecond Odſſey.

Such were his words; and Hymen now prepares
 To light his torch, and give me up to cares; 316
 Th' afflictive hand of wrathful Jove to bear:
 A wretch the most compleat that breathes the air!
 Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due!
 Careless to please, with insolence ye woo! 320
 The gen'rous lovers, studious to succeed,
 Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed;

What mighty labours would he then create,
 To seize his treasures, and divide his state,
 The royal palace to the queen convey,
 Or him she blesses in the bridal day?

Penelope therefore by this declaration gives the suitors to understand, that the palace belonged not to her, but Telemachus. This assertion has a double effect; it is intended to make the suitors less warm in their addresses; or if they persist, to set the injustice done to Telemachus in open view. The beauty of all the speeches of Penelope in this book is so obvious that it needs no explanation; Homer gives her a very amiable character, she is good in every relation of life, merciful to the poor and stranger, a tender mother, and an affectionate wife; every period is almost a lecture of morality.

My father, mother, all, I trust to thee;
 To them, to them transfer the love of me.

This shews the duty of the child to the parent; it may be extended to all persons to whom we owe any duty; and humanity requires that we should endeavour to ease the burthen of our friends in proportion to their calamities; we should at all times consult their happiness, but chiefly in the hour of adversity. A friend should be a support to lean upon in all our infirmities.

By precious gifts the vow sincere display:

You, only you, make her ye love your prey.

Well pleas'd Ulysses hears his queen deceive 325

The suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give:

v. 323. *By precious gifts the vow sincere display:*

You, only you, make her ye love your prey.]

Horace, lib. ii. Sat. 5. makes a very severe reflection upon Penelope, and in her person (I say not how justly) upon the whole sex: he gives the avarice of the suitors as the sole reason of Penelope's chastity; and insinuates that women would sell their virtue, if men would be at the expence to buy.

“ Venit enim magnum donandi parca Juventus,

“ Nec tantum Veneris, quantum studiosa culinæ.

“ Sic tibi Penelope frugi est: quæ si semel uno

“ De sene gustarit, tecum partita lucellum;

“ Ut canis, a corio nunquam absterrebitur uncto.”

Horace had this passage in view, and imputes the coldness of Penelope to a want of generosity in her admirers. Diodorus assures us, that Venus had a temple in Egypt dedicated to her under the title of *χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτη*: or *golden Venus*; and it is her usual epithet throughout all Homer. Near Memphis there was an allotment of ground called *the field of golden Venus*: but it ought not to be concealed, that some persons believe she bears that name from the golden colour of her hair. Horace, to give his satire the greater strength, puts the words into the mouth of the prophet Tiresias, a person of unerring veracity.

v. 325. *Well-pleas'd Ulysses hears his queen deceive*

The suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give.]

This conduct may appear somewhat extraordinary both in Penelope and Ulysses; she not only takes, but asks pre-

False hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray,
And promise, yet elude the bridal day.

sents from persons whom she never intends to marry : is not this a sign either of avarice or falshood ? and is not Ulysses equally guilty, who rejoices at it ? But in reality, Penelope is no way faulty ; she deceives the suitors with hopes of marriage by accepting these presents, but it is for this sole reason that she accepts them ; she intends to give them false hopes, and by that method to defer the nuptial hour : it is not injustice, but an equitable reprisal ; they had violently wasted her treasures, and she artfully recovers part of them by a piece of refined management. Dacier defends her after another method : she believes that Penelope thus acts, not out of interest but honour ; it was a disgrace to so great a princess to have so many admirers, and never to receive from their hands such presents as custom not only allows, but commands ; neither is Ulysses blameable, who rejoices at his wife's policy. He understood her intent, and being artful himself, smiles to see her artfulness.

Plutarch in his treatise of reading poems, vindicates Ulysses very much in the same way : if (says that author) Ulysses rejoiced at Penelope's art in drawing presents from the suitors out of avarice, he discovers himself to be a sordid prostitute of his wife ; but if through a wise foresight he hoped by her acceptance of the presents to get the suitors more into his power, by lulling them more into security, and laying all their suspicions asleep thro' a sudden prospect of marriage ; if this occasioned his joy, this joy arising from her artful management, and from a full confidence in his wife, is no ways blameable, but proceeds from a sufficient and laudable cause. In short, the suitors were enemies, and nothing could be practised dishonourably against them, that either Ulysses or Penelope could act consistently with their own honour.

While yet she speaks, the gay Antinous cries,
 Offspring of kings, and more than woman wife !
 'Tis right ; 'tis man's prerogative to give ; 331
 And custom bids thee without shame receive ;
 Yet never, never, from thy dome we move,
 'Till Hymen lights the torch of spousal love.

The peers dispatch their heralds to convey 355
 The gifts of love ; with speed they take the way.
 A robe Antinous gives of shining dyes,
 The varying hues in gay confusion rise
 Rich from the artist's hand ! twelve clasps of gold
 Close to the left'ning waist the vest infold ; 340
 Down from the swelling loins the vest unbound
 Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.
 A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,
 That shot effulgence like the solar ray,

v. 327. *False hopes she kindles.*] It is certain that the words in the Greek will bear a double construction, and *δέλγε θυμὸν μελιχίῳ ἐπέεσσιν* may refer either to Penelope or Ulysses. Eustathius thinks they are spoken of Ulysses ; then the meaning is, that Ulysses comforted himself with her amusing words, while he formed a design very different from what her words expressed ; but Dacier refers them to Penelope, perhaps with better reason : *δέλγε* depends upon *φάτο* in the preceding line ; and by thus understanding it, the construction becomes easy and natural : and the sentence means, that Penelope's words flattered the suitors into hopes of marriage, while her thoughts were very distant from complying with their inclinations : this interpretation best agrees with the general design of Penelope, which was to act an artful part, and neither comply with, nor absolutely refuse their addresses.

Eurymachus presents: and ear-rings bright, 345
 With triple stars, that cast a trembling light.

Pisander bears a necklace wrought with art ;
 And ev'ry peer, expressive of his heart,
 A gift bestows: this done, the queen ascends,
 And slow behind her damsel-train attends. 350

Then to the dance they form the vocal strain,
 'Till Hesperus leads forth the starry train ;
 And now he raises, as the day-light fades,
 His golden circlet in the deep'ning shades :
 Three vases heap'd with copious fires display 355
 O'er all the palace a fictitious day ;
 From space to space the torch wide-beaming burns,
 And sprightly damsels trim the rays by turns.

v. 355. *Three vases heap'd with copious fires display
 O'er all the palace a fictitious day.]*

The word in the Greek is λαμπτήρ, or a vase which was placed upon a tripod, upon which the ancients burnt dry and oftentimes odoriferous wood, to give at once both perfume and light. Eustathius explains it by χυζόπυς, or a vessel raised on feet in the nature of an hearth. Hesychius explains λαμπτήρ, an hearth placed in the middle of the house or hall, on which they burnt dry wood with intermingled torches to enlighten it. It is strange that there is no mention of lamps, but only torches, in Homer; undoubtedly lamps were not yet in use in Greece, although much earlier found out by the Hebrews: thus Exod. xxv. 6. oil is mentioned, and enjoined to be used in giving light to the sanctuary.

To whom the king: Ill suits your sex to stay
 Alone with men! ye modest maids, away! 360
 Go, with the queen the spindle guide; or cull
 (The partners of her cares) the silver wool;
 Be it my task the torches to supply,
 Ev'n till the morning lamp adorns the sky;
 Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care, 365
 Sleepless I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.

Scornful they heard: Melanthe, fair and young
 (Melanthe, from the loins of Dolius sprung,
 Who with the queen her years an infant led,
 With the soft fondness of a daughter bred) 370
 Chiefly derides: regardless of the cares
 Her queen endures, polluted joys she shares
 Nocturnal with Eurymachus! With eyes
 That speak disdain, the wanton thus replies.

Oh! whither wanders thy distemper'd brain,
 Thou bold intruder on a princely train? 376

v. 359. — — — *Ill suits your sex to stay
 Alone with men! ye modest maids, away!*]

Homer is perpetually giving us lessons of decency and morality. It may be thought that this interlude between Ulysses and the damsels of Penelope is foreign to the action of the *Odyssey*; but in reality it is far from it: the poet undertook to describe the disorders which the absence of a prince occasions in his family: this passage is an instance of it; and Homer with good judgment makes these wantons declare their contempt of Ulysses, and their favour to their suitors, that we may acknowledge the justice of their punishment in the subsequent parts of the *Odyssey*.

Hence to the vag'rant's rendezvous repair;
 Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.
 Proceeds this boldness from a turn of soul,
 Or flows licentious from the copious bowl? 380
 Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?
 A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,

v. 377. *Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;
 Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.]*

I flatter myself that I have given the true sense of χαλκήϊος δόμος, and λέσχη: in Greece the beggars in winter retired by night to publick forges for their warmth, or to some rendezvous where they entertained themselves as it were in a common assembly. Eustathius explains λέσχη to be a publick place without any doors, where beggars were used to lodge. Hesychius gives us several interpretations of the word, that it signifies an assembly, a conversation; it implies also publick stoves or baths; and Eustathius informs us from Aristophanes, that beggars used to take up their lodgings in the public baths, as well as in these places mentioned by Homer; χαλκήϊος δόμος is an office of men that work in brass. He further observes that these two places are used after the same manner in Hesiod.

Πὰρ δ' ἴθι χάλκειον θῶκον, καὶ ἐπ' ἀλέα λέσχην
 ὦρη χειμέριη, ὅποτε κρύει ἀνερας εἴργον
 ἰσχύει. —————

It may not be improper to observe, that πὰρ δ' ἴθι θῶκον χάλκειον is very ill translated by *Accede aeneam sedem*, in the Latin version; it should be *fuge officinam arariam*.

v. 381. *Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?]* The word in Homer is ἀλύης, which is used in various places; sometimes (observes Plutarch in his treatise upon reading poems) it signifies *being disquieted in mind*,

ὦς ἔφατ' ἢ ἀλύεισ' ἀπιθήσατο, τείρετο δ' αἰνῶς.

Who, short'ning with a storm of blows thy stay,
 Shall fend thee howling all in blood away ! 384

To whom with frowns : O impudent in wrong !
 Thy lord shall curb that insolence of tongue ;
 Know to Telemachus I tell th' offence :

The scourge, the scourge shall lash thee into sense.

With conscious shame they hear the stern rebuke,
 Nor longer durst sustain the sov'reign look. 390

Then to the servile task the monarch turns
 His royal hands: each torch refulgent burns
 With added day : meanwhile in museful mood,
 Absorpt in thought on vengeance fix'd he stood.
 And now the martial Maid, by deeper wrongs 395
 To rouse Ulysses points the suitors tongues,

In other places it implies *an insolent joy, or boasting* ; and then he quotes this verse,

Ἡ ἀλύτης ὄτι Ἴηρον ἐνικήσας.

v. 395. *And now the martial Maid, by deeper wrongs
 To rouse Ulysses points the suitors' tongues.]*

It may be thought unjustifiable in Homer, to introduce Minerva exciting the suitors to violence. Dacier defends the poet by shewing that the sentiment is conformable to true theology : and the all-wise Author of our being is pleas'd sometimes to harden the hearts of the wicked, (or rather to permit them to harden their own hearts) that they may fill up the measure of their crimes, and be ripe for judgment : yet we are not to imagine, that any person is necessitated to be wicked : it is not the hardening the heart that originally makes men impious, but they are first impious, and then they are delivered over to an hardness of heart.

Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man ;
Thoughtless and gay, Eurymachus began.

Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends !
Some God no doubt this stranger kindly sends ; 400
The shining baldness of his head survey,
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.—

But Homer may be justified another way ; and Minerva may be understood to act thus in favour of Ulysses : the Goddess of Wisdom infatuates the suitors to insult that hero, and hasten their own destruction.

v. 400. *Some God no doubt, this stranger kindly sends.]* Aristotle affirms that Homer is the father of poetry ; not only of the epick, but also of the dramattick ; that he taught how to write tragedy in the Iliad, and comedy by several short sketches in the Odyssey. Eustathius here remarks, that he likewise gave a model for satire, of which the Cyclops of Euripides still extant is an example ; (which is a satirick poem founded upon the story of Polypheme in Homer.) I confess my eye is not sharp enough to see the dignity of these railleries ; and it may be thought that Homer is the father of another kind of poetry, I mean the farce, and that these low conceits are no way to be justified, but by being put into the mouths of the suitors, persons of no dignity or character. Longinus brings such descriptions of the suitors, as instances of the decay of Homer's genius. When that declines (observes that author) poets commonly please themselves with painting manners : such is Homer's description of the lives led by the suitors in the palace of Ulysses : for in reality all that description is a kind of comedy, wherein the different characters of men are painted.

v. 401. *The shining baldness of his head survey,
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.]*

This in Dacier's judgment is a raillery purely satirical ; it

Then to the king that leuell'd haughty Troy.
 Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ
 Those hands in works ; to tend the rural trade, 405
 To dress the walk, and form th' embow'ring shade?
 So food and raiment constant will I give :
 But idly thus thy soul prefers to live,
 And starve by strolling, not by work to thrive. }

To whom incens'd : Should we, O prince, en-
 gage 410

In rival tasks beneath the burning rage
 Of summer suns ; were both constrain'd to wield,
 Foodless, the scythe along the burthen'd field ;

is drawn from the shining gloss of an old man's bald head. But if this be purely satyrical, to be a satyr is to be a bad man : to rally natural infirmities is inhumanity : old age is venerable, and the bald head as well as the gray hair is an honour, and ought not to be the subject of railery. I doubt not but Homer put it into the mouth of Eurymachus to make him more odious, and to shew us that the same man who invades his prince's property, insults the stranger, and outrages the poor ; pays no deference to old age, but is base enough to contemn what he ought to honour. Vice and folly are the province of satyr, not human infirmity.

V. 412. — — *were both constrain'd to wield,*

Foodless, the scythe along the burthen'd field.]

I doubt not but such employments as these, now only suitable to low life, will seem mean to many readers, and unworthy of the dignity of epick poetry : it is no defence to say that they are mentioned by a beggar, and therefore agreeable to his character : the words are addressed to a prince, and suppose that a skill in such works was not

Or should we labour, while the ploughshare wounds,
With steers of equal strength, th' allotted grounds:

unusual to persons of eminent stations; otherwise the challenge of Ulysses is ridiculously absurd. Who could forbear laughing, if he should hear one of our beggars challenge a peer, to plough or mow with him all day without eating? The truth is, the greatest persons followed such employments without any diminution of their dignities; nay a skill in such works as agriculture was a glory even to a king: Homer here places it upon a level with military science, and the knowledge of the cultivation of the ground is equalled to glory in war. In the preface to the pastorals of Virgil, (but not written by Mr. Dryden) there is a passage that shews that the same simplicity of manners prevailed amongst the antient Latins, as amongst the antient Greeks: "It ought not, says that
" author, to surprize a modern writer, that kings laid
" down their first rudiments of government in tending
" their mute subjects, their herds and flocks: nor ought
" it to seem strange that the master of the horie to king
" Latinus in the ninth Æneid was found in the homely
" employment of cleaving blocks, when news of the first
" skirmish between the Trojans and Latins was brought
" to him." This passage fully vindicates Homer, and shews that such employments were no dishonour to the greatest persons; but there are two errors in the quotation; it is not taken from the ninth but the seventh Æneid; nor is Tyrrheus, who cleaves the blocks, master of the horse to king Latinus, but the intendant of his flocks; or as Dryden translates it,

Tyrrheus, chief ranger to the Latian king.

" — — Tyrrheusque pater, cui regia parent
" Armenta, & latè custodia credita campi."

Beneath my labours, how thy wond'ring eyes 416
Might see the fable field at once arise!

Should Jove dire war unloose; with spear and
shield,

And nodding helm, I tread th' ensanguin'd field,
Fierce in the van: then wou'dst thou, wou'dst
thou,—say,— 420

Misname me, glutton, in that glorious day?

No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave disgrace;
'Tis thou injurious art, not I am base.

Proud to seem brave among a coward train!

But know, thou art not valorous but vain. 425

Gods! should the stern Ulysses rise in might,
These gates would seem too narrow for thy flight.

Tyrrheus is no otherwise a warrior, than as a deer under his charge, being killed, engages him in a quarrel, and he arms the rusticks to encounter the Trojans who slew it.

“ — — — vocat agmina Tyrrheus
Quadrifidam quercum cuneis ut forte coactis
Seindebat”——

Tyrrheus, the foster-father of the beast,
Then clench'd an hatchet in his horny fist;
But held his hand from the descending stroke,
And left his wedge within the cloven oak.

It is true, though Tyrrheus was not master of the horse to the king, yet his office was a post of dignity, otherwise it had been very easy for Virgil to have given him a more noble employment.

While yet he speaks, Eurymachus replies,
With indignation flashing from his eyes.

Slave, I with justice might deserve the wrong,
Should I not punish that opprobrious tongue, 431
Irrev'rent to the great, and uncontrol'd,
Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold?
Perhaps, these outrages from Irus flow,
A worthless triumph o'er a worthless foe! 435

He said, and with full force a footstool threw:
Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew;
Ulysses, cautious of the vengeful foe,
Stoops to the ground, and disappoints the blow.
Not so a youth who deals the goblet round, 440
Full on his shoulder it inflicts a wound,
Dash'd from his hand the sounding goblet flies,
He shrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathless lies.

Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the sky,
'Till mutual thus the peers indignant cry; 445
O had this stranger sunk to realms beneath,
To the black realms of darkness and of death,
Ere yet he trod these shores! to strife he draws
Peer against peer; and what the weighty cause?
A vagabond! for him the great destroy 450
In vile ignoble jars, the feast of joy.

To whom the stern Telemachus arose!
Gods! what wild folly from the goblet flows?
Whence this unguarded openness of soul,
But from the licence of the copious bowl? 455

Or heav'n delusion sends : but hence, away !
 Force I forbear, and without force obey.

Silent, abash'd, they hear the stern rebuke,
 'Till thus Amphinomus the silence broke.

True are his words, and he whom truth offends
 Not with Telemachus, but truth contends ; 461
 Let not the hand of violence invade
 The rev'rend stranger, or the spotless maid ;
 Retire we hence ! but crown with rosy wine
 The flowing goblet to the Pow'r's divine ; 465
 Guard he his guest beneath whose roof he stands,
 This justice, this the social rite demands.

The peers assent ; the goblet Mulius crown'd
 With purple juice, and bore in order round ;

v. 457. *Force I forbear, and without force obey.*] This is very artful in Telemachus ; he had spoken warmly in defence of Ulysses, and he apprehends lest he should have provoked the suitors too far ; he therefore softens his expression, to avoid suspicions of a latent cause, why he interests himself so vigorously in vindication of a beggar, against the princes of the country. Besides, too obstinate an opposition might have provoked the suitors to have continued all night in the palace, which would have hindered Ulysses and Telemachus from concerting their measures to bring about their destruction : Telemachus therefore, to induce them to withdraw, uses menaces, but menaces approaching to persuasion : if he had used violence, matters must immediately have come to extremities.

Each peer successive his libation pours 470
 To the blest Gods that fill th' aerial bow'rs ;

v. 470. *Each peer successive his libation pours
 To the blest Gods———]*

We have already observed that libations were made to the Gods before and after meals ; here we see the suitors offer their libation before they retire to repose. We are not to ascribe this religious act to the piety of these debauchees, but to the customs of the times ; they practise not true religion, but only the exteriors of it ; they are not pious, but fashionable.

The action of this book is comprehended in a very short duration of time ; it begins towards the close of the day, and ends at the time when the suitors withdraw to repose ; this is the evening and part of the night of the thirty-ninth day.

In general, this book is in the Greek very beautiful ; the combat between Irus and Ulysses is naturally described ; it is indeed between beggars, but yet not without dignity, it being almost of the same nature with the single combats practised amongst heroes in their most solemn games ; as is evident from that in the Iliad, at the funeral of Patroclus. I could wish Homer had not condescended to those low jests and mean railleries towards the conclusion : it is true, they are not without effect, as they agree with the characters of the suitors, and make Ulysses a spectator of the disorders of his own family, and provoke him to a speedy vengeance : but might not more serious provocations have been found out, such as might become the gravity and majesty of epick poetry ? or if gaiety was essential to his characters, are quibbles so too ? These may be thought to be of the same le-

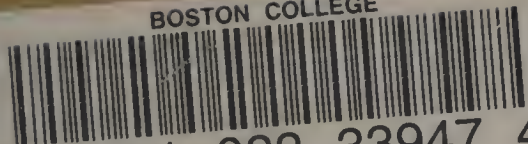
Then swill'd with wine, with noise the crowds
obey,

And rushing forth tumultuous, reel away.

vel with those conceits which Milton puts into the mouth of the devil, and which disgrace his poem. But the dignity, the tenderness, and justness of the sentiments, in all the speeches of Penelope, more than atone for the low railleries of Eurymachus.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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